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DEVIL-DANCERS, WITCH-FINDERS, RAIN-MAKERS, AND MEDICINE-MEN.

INTRODUCTION.

SAVAGES DANCING.

The World of Savages.

Lang, in his *Myth, Ritual and Religion*, has the following remarks on this subject. They explain many of the practices which will hereafter be described.

"1. We have that nebulous and confused frame of mind to which all things, animate or inanimate, human, animal, vegetable, or inorganic, seem on the same level of life, passion, and reason. The savage draws no hard and fast line be-

tween himself and the things in the world. He regards himself as literally akin to animals and plants, and heavenly bodies; he attributes sex and procreative powers even to stones, and rocks, and he assigns human speech and human feelings to sun and moon, stars and wind, no less than to beasts, birds, and fishes. . . . . .

3. Another peculiarity of savage belief naturally connects itself with that which has just been described. The savage has very strong ideas about the persistent existence of the souls of the dead. They retain much of their old nature, but are often more malignant after death than they had been during life. They are frequently, at the beck and call of the conjurer, whom they aid with their advice and with their magical power. By virtue of the close connection already spoken of between man and the animals, the souls of the dead are not rarely supposed to migrate into the bodies of beasts, or to resort to the condition of that species of creatures with which each tribe supposes itself to be related by ties of kinship. With the usual inconsistency of mythical belief, the souls of the dead are spoken of, at other times, as if they inhabited a spiritual world, usually a gloomy place, which mortal men may visit, but whence no one can escape who has tasted of the food of the ghosts.

4. In connection with spirits a far-reaching savage philosophy prevails. It is not unusual to assign a ghost to all objects, animate or inanimate, and the spirit or strength of a man is frequently regarded as something separable, or something with a definite locality in the body. A man's strength and spirit may reside in his kidney fat, in his heart, in a lock of his hair, or may even be stored by him in some separate receptacle. Very frequently a man is held capable of detaching his soul from his body, and letting it roam about on his business, sometimes in the form of a bird or other animal.

5. Many minor savage beliefs might be named, such as the common faith in friendly or protecting animals, and the notion that 'natural deaths' (as we call them) are always unnatural, that death is always caused by some hostile spirit or conjurer. From this opinion comes the myth that man is not naturally subject to death; that death was somehow introduced into the world by a mistake or misdeed, is a corollary.

6. One more peculiarity of the savage mind remains to be considered in this brief summary. The savage, like the civilised man, is curious. The first faint impulses of the scientific spirit are at work in his brain; he is anxious to give himself an account of the world in which he finds himself. But he is not more curious than he is, on occasion, credulous. His intellect is eager to ask questions, as is the habit of children, but his intellect is also lazy, and he is content with the first answer that comes to hand." Vol. I. pp. 47, 49.

The world of the savage is a jungle of foolish fancies, in which gods and beasts, and men and stars and ghosts all move madly on a level of common personality and animation, all changing shapes at random.

The Belief of Savages in Magic and Sorcery.

Lang says :—

"The world and all the things in it being conceived of vaguely as sensible and rational, are supposed to obey the commands of certain members of each tribe, such as chiefs, jugglers, or conjurers. These conjurers can affect the weather, work miracles, assume what shapes, animal, vegetable, or inorganic, they please, and can change other persons into similar shapes. It has already been shown that

savage man has regarded all *things* as *persons* much on a level with himself. It has now to be shown *what kind of person he conceives himself to be.* He does not look on men as civilised races regard them, that is, as beings with strict limitations. On the other hand, he thinks of certain members of his tribe as exempt from all limitations, and capable of working every miracle that tradition has ever attributed to prophets or gods. Nor are such miraculous powers supposed by savages to be at all rare among themselves. Though highly valued, miraculous attainments are not believed to be unusual. When a savage regards the sky or sun or wind as a person, he does not mean merely a person with the limitations recognised by civilised races. He means a person with the miraculous powers of the medicine-man.* The sky, sun, wind, or other elemental personage can converse with the dead, and can turn himself and his neighbours into animals, stones and trees.

The savage seeks an explanation, a theory of things, based on his experience. But his knowledge of physical causes and of natural laws is exceedingly scanty, and he is driven to fall back upon supernatural explanations. These supernatural causes themselves the savage believes to be matters of experience. It is to his mind a matter of experience that all nature is personal and animated; that men may change shapes with beasts; that incantations and supernatural beings can cause sunshine and storm.

When an untoward event occurs, savages look for its cause among all the less familiar circumstances of the last few days, and select the determining cause very much at random.

In the Pacific Ocean the people of one island always attribute hurricanes to the machinations of the people of the nearest island to windward. The wind comes from them; therefore (as their medicine-men can notoriously influence the weather) they must have sent the wind. This unneighborly act is regarded as a just cause of war. The chief principle, then, of savage science is that antecedence and consequence in time are the same as effect and cause. Again savage science holds that *like affects like;* that you can injure a man, for example, by injuring his effigy. On these principles the savage explains the world to himself, and on those principles he tries to subdue to himself the world. Now the putting of these principles into practice is simply the exercise of art magic, an art to which nothing seems impossible. The belief that medicine-men practise this art is universal among savages.

Any object once in a man's possession, especially his hair or his nails, is supposed to be capable of being used against him by a sorcerer. The part suggests the whole. A lock of a man's hair was part of the man; to destroy the hair is to destroy its former owner.

Among some American Indians, when any one is ill, an image of his disease, a boil or what not, is carved in wood. This little image is then placed in a bowl of water and shot at with a gun. The image of the disease being destroyed, the disease itself is expected to disappear.

We found among savages the belief in the power of songs of *incantation* or *mantras.* The most miraculous effects are caused by pronouncing a few lines in rhyme. An American Indian will give you a form of incantation with which he says you will be able to call to you all the birds from the sky, and all the foxes and wolves from their burrows. There are supposed to be mantras which raise the wind; which split rocks; by virtue of which the shape

* American Indians call magicians or sorcerers medicine-men. The word medicine here means *mystery*, something wonderful.

of any animal may be, assumed at will, or a person can fly through the air.

Let us recapitulate the powers attributed all over the world, by the lower people, to medicine-men. The medicine-man has all miracles at his command. He rules the sky, he flies into the air, he becomes visible or invisible at will, he can take or confer any form at pleasure, and resume his human shape. He cau control spirits, can converse with the dead, and can descend to their abodes."*

The various superstitions to be described, will now be taken up in order.

DEVIL-DANCERS.

The English word *devil* comes from a word meaning the *accuser* or *slanderer.* In the Bible it is especially applied to Satan, the Evil One, the tempter and spiritual enemy of mankind. The evil spirits, his followers, who tempt men to sin are also called devils. The following remarks have no reference whatever to Satan and his angels. They relate exclusively to the evil spirits believed to cause sickness, disease among cattle, and other misfortunes.

Demonolatry, or the worship of evil spirits, is the religion of savages in all parts of the world. Without doubt, it was the original superstition over a great part of Asia. To the present day it survives, more or less, from Siberia to South Ceylon. Buddhism has been powerless to overcome it. The Sinhalese are far more under its influence than the creed of Gautama. The Burmese, from the highest to the lowest, both publicly and privately, engage in demon worship. Some account of it will now be given as practised in the countries when it is still chiefly prevalent.

Tinnevelly and Travancore.

A belief in the existence of evil spirits of the kind described exists all over India. Sir Monier Williams says:

"The great majority of the inhabitants of India, are, from the cradle to the burning ground, victims of a form of mental disease which is best expressed by the term demonophobia. They are haunted and oppressed by a perpetual dread of demons. They are firmly convinced that evil spirits of all kinds, from malignant fiends to merely mischievous imps and elves, are ever on the watch to harm, harass, and torment them, to cause plague, sickness, famine and disaster, to impede, injure, and mar every good work.

"So deep-seated and ineradicable is the fear of evil spirits in the minds of the lower orders, that in many villages of India the doors of the houses are never allowed to face the South, lest the entrance of some dreaded demon should be facilitated."*

Bishop Caldwell says:

"Every Hindu work containing allusions to Native life, and the Dictionaries of all the Hindu dialects, prove the general prevalence of a belief in the existence of malicious or mischievous demons, in demoniacal inflictions and possessions, and in the power of exorcism. The chief peculiarity of the superstition as at exists amongst the Shanars, or Palmyra-climbers, consists in their *systematic worship* of the demons in which all believe. In every part of India innumerable legends respecting goblins and their malice are current; but scarcely any trace of their worship in the proper sense of the term, much less of their exclusive worship can be discovered beyond the districts which the Shanars, or other primitive illiterate tribes are found."†

* Lang's *Myth, Ritual and Religion*, Vol. I. pp. 82-120, abridged.

* *Religious Thought and Life in India*, pp. 210, 245.
† *The Tinnevelly Shanars*, p. 17.

Devil Worship, the proper term.—Bishop Caldwell says:

"In describing the *positive* portion of the religion of the Shanars as devil worship, the word used is not only the most

DEVIL WORSHIP.

appropriate one we know, but it exactly corresponds with the term used by the Shanars themselves. In so far as they recognise the existence of God, they appear to consider Him as good and just; and as there are some good points in the character of most of the Brahmanical deities, they style them also good spirits or gods. But the demons worshipped by themselves and their forefathers are considered to be beings of unmixed malignity, *bonâ fide* fiends; and it is supposed to be necessary to worship them simply and solely because they are malignant. Consequently, demonolatry or devil-worship, is the only term by which the religion of the Shanars can be accurately described." p. 12.

Origin, and character of the Devils.—Bishop Caldwell gives the following account:

"The majority of the devils are supposed to have originally been human beings; and the class of persons most frequently supposed to have been transformed into devils are those who had met with a sudden or violent death, especially if they had made themselves dreaded in their life-time. Devils may in consequence be either male or female, of low or high caste, of Hindu or foreign lineage. Their character and mode of life seem to be little if at all modified by differences of this nature. All are powerful, malicious, and interfering; and all are desirous of bloody sacrifices and frantic dances. The only differences apparent are in the structure of the temple or image built to their honour, the insignia worn by their priests, the minutiæ of the ceremonies observed in their worship, the preference of the sacrifice of a goat by one, a hog by another, and a cock by a third, or in the addition of libations of ardent spirits for which Pariar demons stipulate. As for their abode, the majority of the devils are supposed to dwell in trees; some wander to and fro, and go up and down uninhabited wastes; some skulk in shady retreats. Sometimes they take up their abode in houses; and it often happens that a devil will take a fancy to dispossess the soul and inhabit the body of one of his votaries; in which case the personal consciousness of the possessed party ceases, and the screaming, gesticulating, and pythonizing* are supposed to be the demon's acts.

Signs of Possession.—Every malady, however trivial, is supposed by the more superstitious to be inflicted by a devil, and a sacrifice is necessary for its removal; but the unusual severity or continuance of any disease; or the appearance of symptoms which are not recorded in the physician's

* Acting the part of a prophet, foretelling future events.

shastra, are proofs of possession of which no Shanar can entertain a doubt. When a woman is heard to laugh and weep alternately without any adequate cause, or shriek and look wild when no snake or wild beast can be perceived, what Shanar can suppose anything but a devil to be the cause of the mischief? The Native doctor, himself a Shanar, is sent for to give his advice. He brings his library with him (he can't read, but it is all safe in his memory), and his complete science of medicine in one hundred stanzas, as revealed by the sage Agastya to his disciple Pulastya; but in vain he recites his prescriptions, in vain he coins hard words. As no description of hysterical complaints is contained in his authorities, what can he do but decide that a devil has taken possession of the woman, and recommend that a sacrifice be offered to him forthwith, with a cloth and a white fowl for the doctor? Sometimes the possession takes the form of a stroke of the sun, epilepsy or catalepsy, a sudden fright, mania, or the vertigo and stupor caused by an overflow of bile. But any ordinary disease when it seems incurable, and the patient begins to waste away, is pronounced a possession.

Sometimes the friends are not desirous of expelling the evil spirit all at once, but send for music, get up a devil dance, and call upon the demon to prophesy. This is particularly the case when some member of the family has been long sick, and they are anxious to know what is to be the result of the sickness, and are wishing and waiting for a demon's visit.

If they desire to expel the demon, there is no lack of moving ceremonies and powerful incarnations, each of which has been tried and found successful innumerable times. If the devil should prove an obstinate one, and refuse to leave, charm they never so wisely, his retreat may generally be hastened by the vigorous application of a slipper or a broom to the shoulders of the possessed person, the operator taking care to use at the same time the most scurrilous language he can think of. After a time the demoniac loses his downcast, sullen look. He begins to get angry and writhe about under the slippering, and at length cries, "I go, I go." They then ask his name and why he came there. He tells them that he is such and such a devil, whom they have neglected ever so long, and he wants an offering; or he calls himself by the name of some deceased relative, who, as they now learn for the first time, has become a demon. As soon as the demon consents to leave, the beating ceases; and not unfrequently immediate preparations are made for a sacrifice, as a compensation to his feelings for the ignominy of the exorcism. The possessed person now awakes as from a sleep, and appears to have no knowledge of anything that has happened.

Missionaries have sometimes been sent for to try the effect of European remedies; and when they have interfered, have generally succeeded to the people's satisfaction, as well as their own. Some of the possessions yield by degrees to moral influences and alteratives; but in the majority of cases the most effectual exercise is—tartar emetic (a powerful medicine).

Injuries supposed to be caused by Demons.—The demons especially show their power in cases of possession; but they are frequently contented with inflicting minor injuries. Not only the failure of rain, or a blight falling on the crops, but even the accidents, diseases which befall cattle, and trivial losses in trade, are considered instances of a devil's malevolence. Sometimes, again, demons are contented with frightening the timid, without doing any real harm. People hear a strange noise at night; and immediately they see a devil making his escape in the shape of a dog as

large as a hyena, or cat with eyes like two lamps. In the dusk of the evening devils have been observed in a burial or burning ground, assuming various shapes one after another as often as the eye of the observer is turned away; and they have often been known at night to ride across the country on invisible horses, or glide over marshy lands in the shape of a wandering, flickering light. In all their journeyings they move along without touching the ground; their elevation above the ground being proportioned to their rank and importance. I have known a village deserted and the people afraid even to remove the materials of their houses, in consequence of the terror caused by stones being thrown on their roofs at night by invisible hands. Demons more malicious still have sometimes been known under cover of the night to insert combustible materials under the leaves of thatched roofs. Even in the day time, about the close of the hot season, when the winds fail, they may often be seen careering along in the shape of a whirlwind, catching up and whisking about in their fierce play every dry stick and leaf that happens to lie in their path. In short, the demons do much evil, but no good. They often cause terror but never bestow benefits or evince any affection for their votaries. They must be placated by sacrifice because they are so mischievous; but there is no use supplicating their favor. If in any case the hope of obtaining a benefit seem to be their votary's motive in worshipping them, further inquiry proves that it is under the supposition that the demon's malignity stands in the way of what would otherwise be obtained as a matter of course.

Temples.—The places in which the demons are worshipped are commonly termed 'Pe-coils' or devil temples. Some of them, especially those erected to the sanguinary forms of Kali, are small, mean, tomb-like buildings, with an image at the further end of the cloister. But the majority of the devil temples are of a still more primitive construction. The walls are built neither with stone nor brick; the roof is neither terraced nor tiled nor even thatched; and they have neither porches nor penetralia. A heap of earth raised into a pyramidal shape, and adorned with streaks of white-wash, sometimes alternating with red ochre, constitutes, in the majority of cases, both the temple and the demon's image; and a smaller heap in front of the temple with a flat surface forming the altar. In such cases, a large conspicuous tree, will generally be observed in the vicinity. This tree is supposed to be the devil's ordinary dwelling-place from which he snuffs up the odour of the sacrificial blood, and descends unseen to join in the feast."*

Names of Demons.—The late Rev. S. Mateer gives the name of some of the demons worshipped in Travancore.

"One of the principal objects of superstitions dread is the demon, called 'Mādan,' a word signifying 'he who is like a cow.' He is supposed to be very large and tall, his body being of a black colour and covered with hair like that of a cow. Images of Mādan are never made. He is said to strike men and oxen with sudden illnesses, and is in consequence greatly feared.

"There are numerous forms of Mādan, to which many mischievous acts are ascribed. 'Chūla Mādan,' or 'Furnace devil,' is worshipped by potters, who dread his breaking their pottery while it is being burnt in the kiln; 'Kumila Mādan,' or 'Bubble devil,' dances on the surface of the waters; 'Porathe Mādan' is the 'Fighting devil;' 'Neesa Mādan' is the 'Wicked devil.'

"'Chudala Mādan,' or 'graveyard demon,' dwells in places where corpses have been

* *Tinnevelly Shanars*, pp. 13-18 abridged.

MALLAN AND HIS WIFE KARUNKALI.

buried or burnt. Many children are named after this and other demons, to whom they are dedicated to save them from infantile diseases. In some families the eldest son is named after the demon worshipped by the father's family, and the eldest daughter after that of the mother's family.

"Another popular demon is Mallan, 'the giant,' revered especially by the tribes who inhabit the mountains of Travancore, and who are supposed to possess great influence over the demons. Sometimes it is said that two of these gigantic fiends, 16 or 17 feet high, with terrible countenances and enormous projecting tusks, are seen fighting together, and throwing lighted brands at each other. The engraving gives an accurate representation of the common clay images of Mallan and his wife Karunkali, or 'Black Kāli' who is represented in his right."*

Bishop Caldwell says:

"The process of demonification is still going on amongst the Shanars; and in every case the characteristics of the devil and his worship are derived from the character and exploits of his human prototype. There is a continual succession of devils claiming the adoration of the Shanars, and after a time sinking out forgetfulness. One of the demons most feared at present, Palavéshan, was a Maraver slave who made himself celebrated for his robberies and outrages. Already thousands of persons are called after his name. A European was till recently worshipped as a demon. He was an English officer, a Captain Pole, who was mortally wounded at the taking of the Travancore lines in A. D. 1809, and was buried in a sandy waste; where a few years afterwards his worship was established by the Shanars of the neighbourhood. This worship consisted in the offering to his *manes* of spirituous liquors and cheroots."

Devil-Dancing.

Bishop Caldwell says:

"When it is determined to offer a sacrifice to a devil a person is appointed to act the part of priest. Devil-worship is not, like the worship of deities, whether supreme or subordinate, appropriated to a particular order of men, but may be performed by any one who chooses. This priest is styled a 'devil-dancer.' Usually one of the principal men of the village officiates; but sometimes the duty is voluntarily undertaken by some devotee male or

* *The Land of Charity*, pp. 194, 195.

female, who wishes to gain notoriety, or in whom the sight of the preparations excites a sudden zeal. The officiating priest, whoever he may happen to be, is dressed for the occasion in the vestments and ornaments appropriate to the particular devil worshipped. The object in donning the demon's insignia is to strike terror into the imagination of the beholders, but the party-coloured dress and grotesque ornaments, the cap and trident, and jingling bells of the performer, bear so close a resemblance to the usual adjuncts of a pantomime, that a European would find it difficult to look grave. The musical instruments, or rather the instruments of noise, chiefly used in the devil-dance are the tom-tom, or ordinary Indian drum, and the horn; with occasionally the addition of a clarionet when the parties can afford it. But the favourite instrument, became the noisiest, is that

BOW AND BELLS.

which is called the bow. A series of bells of various sizes is fastened to the frame of a gigantic bow; the strings are tightened so as to emit a musical note when struck; and the bow rests on a large empty brazen pot. The instrument is played on by a plectrum, and several musicians join in the performance. One strikes the string of the bow with the plectrum, another produces the base by striking the brazen pot with his hand, and the third keeps time and improves the harmony by a pair of cymbals. As each musician kindles in his work and strives to outstrip his neighbour in the rapidity of his flourishes, and in the loudness of the tone with which he sings the accompaniment, the result is a tumult of frightful sounds, such as may be supposed to delight even a demon's ear.

When the preparations are completed and the devil-dance is about to commence, the music is at first comparatively slow, and the dancer seems impassive and sullen, and either he stands still, or moves about in gloomy silence. Gradually, as the music becomes quicker and louder, his excitement begins to rise. Sometimes to help him to work himself up into a phrenzy he uses medicated draughts, cuts and lacerates his flesh till the blood flows, lashes himself with a huge whip, presses a burning torch to his breast, drinks the blood which flows from his own wounds, or drinks the blood of the sacrifice, putting the throat of the decapitated goat to his mouth. Then, as if he had acquired new life, he begins to brandish his staff of bells and dance with a quick but wild, unsteady step. Suddenly the *afflatus* descends. There is no mistaking that glare, or these frantic leaps. He snorts, he stares, he gyrates. The demon has now taken bodily possession of him; and though he retains the power of utterance and of motion, both are under the demon's control, and his separate consciousness is in obeyance. The bystanders signalize the event by raising a long shout attended with a peculiar vibratory

noise, caused by the motion of the hand and tongue, or the tongue alone. The devil-dancer is now worshipped as a present deity, and every bystander consults him respecting his disease, his wants, the welfare of his absent relatives, the offerings to be made for the accomplishment of their wishes, and, in short, everything for which superhuman knowledge is supposed to be available. As the devil-dancer acts to admiration the part of a maniac, it requires some experience to enable a person to interpret his dubious or unmeaning replies—his muttered voices and uncouth gestures; but the wishes of the parties who consult him help them greatly to interpret his meaning.

"Sometimes the devil-dance and the demoniacal *clairvoyance** are extemporised, especially where the mass of the people are peculiarly addicted to devil-worship and perfectly familiar with the various stages of the process. In such cases, if a person happen to feel the commencement of a shivering fit of an ague or the vertigo of a bilious headache, his untutored imagination teaches him to think himself possessed. He then sways his head from side to side, fixes his eyes into a stare, puts himself into a posture, and begins the maniac dance; and the bystanders run for flowers and fruit for an offering, or a cock or goat to sacrifice to his honour.

TRAVANCORE DEVIL-DANCER.

"The night is the time usually devoted to the orgies of devil-dancing. And as the number of devils worshipped is in some districts equal to the number of the worshippers, and as every act of worship is accompanied with the monotonous din of drums and the bray of horns, the stillness of the night, especially during the prevalence of cholera or any other epidemical disease, is frequently broken by a dismal uproar, more painful to hear on account of the associations connected with it, than on account of its unpleasant effect on the ear and nerves."

The Offering of Bloody Sacrifices:—The object of these Bishop Caldwell explains as follows:

"One of the most important parts of the system of devil-worship is the offering of goats, sheep, fowls, &c., in sacrifice. The animal is led to the altar of the devil-temple adorned with red ochre and garlands of flowers.

* Supposed ability to see things not present to the sense.

Ordinarily its head is separated from the body by a single stroke of a bill-hook; the sacrifice being considered unacceptable to the demon if more than one blow is required. The decapitated body is then held up so that all the blood it contains may flow out upon the demon's altar. The sacrifice being now completed, the animal is cut up on the spot, made into curry, and with the addition of the boiled rice and fruit offered to the demon on the same occasion, forms a sacred meal of which all who have joined in the sacrifice receive a share.

"The sole object of the sacrifice is the removal of the devil's anger or of the calamities which his anger brings down. It should be distinctly understood that sacrifices are never offered on account of the sins of the worshippers, and that the devil's anger is not excited by any moral offence. The religion of the Shanars, such as it is, has no connection with morals. The most common motive in sacrificing to the devil is that of obtaining relief in sickness; and in that case at least the rationale of the rite is sufficiently clear. It consists in offering the demon, life for life—blood for blood. The demon thirsts for the life of his votary or for that of his child; and by a little ceremony and show of respect, a little music and a little coaxing, he may be prevailed upon to be content with the life of a goat instead. Accordingly a goat is sacrificed; its blood is poured out upon the demon's altar, and the offerer goes free."

Decline of Demon Worship.—Bishop Caldwell's pamphlet was printed in 1849. Even then he wrote:

"With the extension of Christianity devil-worship is visibly declining; and the diminution of offerings and influence connected with the declension of their worship is supposed to have given the devils such offence that they are now less placable than formerly. Notwithstanding this complaint, devil worship in many districts of the country is as rampart as ever; and it must be confessed that even among the Christian community it has not entirely disappeared."*

The Rev. T. Walker, of Tinnevelly, writing in 1896, says:

"Heathen Shanars (and other castes too) observe devil-dancing still—much as before. Tuesday and Friday are the usual nights, and in the villages you may always hear the sound of it on those nights. When rain is required, or sickness is about, they have special ceremonies. There are also stated devil-dancing festivals at noted centres. One of the most noted is at Suramathkoil, near Papanásam, where thousands of people of all classes, Brahmans included, gather every year."

Though still so prevalent in some parts, doubtless, compared with 1849, it has diminished in Tinnevelly.

The Rev. J. Duthie, Nagercoil, whose experience extends over nearly 40 years, considers that devil-dancing has declined during that period in Travancore.

Demon Worship in Ceylon.

The professed religion of most of the Sinhalese is Buddhism; but Tennent says: "Under all the icy coldness of this barren system (Buddhism), there burn below the unextinguished fires of another and darker superstition, whose flames overtop the icy summits of the Buddhist philosophy, and excite a deeper and more reverential awe in the imagination of the Sinhalese."

"The followers of Buddha, unsatisfied with the vain pretensions of unattainable perfection, struck down by their internal consciousness of sin and insufficiency, and seeing around them, instead of the reign of universal happiness and the apotheosis of intellect and wisdom, nothing but the ravages of crime and the sufferings pro-

* *Tinnevelly Shanars*, p. 22.

duced by ignorance, have turned with instinctive terror to propitiate the powers of evil, by whom alone such miseries are supposed to be inflicted, and to *worship the demons* and tormentors to whom their superstition is contented to attribute a circumscribed portion of power over the earth.

"DEMON WORSHIP, was the prevailing practice of the Sinhalese before the introduction of Buddhism by Mahindo ... and in the mind of the native of Ceylon this ancient superstition has maintained its ascendancy, notwithstanding the introduction and ostensible prevalence of Buddhism. The latter, whilst it admits the existence of evil spirits, has emphatically prohibited their invocation, on the ground that any malignant influence they may exert over men is merely the consequenceof their vices, whilst the cultivators of virtue may successfully bid them defiance... The Buddhist priests connive at demon worship, because their efforts are ineffectual to suppress it,and the most orthodox Sinhalese, whilst they confess its impropriety, are still driven to resort to it in all their fears and afflictions.

"Independent of the malignant spirits or Yakkhos, who are the authors of indefinite evil, the Sinhalese have a demon or *Sanne* for each form of disease, who is supposed to be its direct agent and inflictor, and who is accordingly invoked for its removal; and others, who delight in the miseries of mankind, are to be propitiated before the arrival of any event over which their pernicious influence might otherwise prevail. Hence on every domestic occurrence, as well as on every domestic calamity, the services of the devil-priests are to be sought, and their ceremonies performed, generally with observances so barbarous as to be the most revolting evidence still extent of the uncivilised habits of the Sinhalese."*

* *Christianity in Ceylon*, pp. 229-233, abridged.

Many of the Sinhalese, from childhood to their dying day, suppose that there are numbers of evil spirits constantly surrounding them, lurking in the rocks, trees, and jungles, seeking to do them harm. They think that there are gods and goddesses, like Katragam and Pattini, who require to be propitiated. They dare not do certain things because the planets are supposed to be unfavourable; their fields and fruit trees may be blasted by the evil eye; the howling of a dog or the sight of an empty pot may make them miserable for a whole day. No man is without enemies, whom he suspects to be seeking to injure him or even cause his death by different kinds of charms.

The Bishop of Colombo says of Ceylon that "the whole soil is covered with a thick and tangled growth of devil ritual, half Hindu and half savage, of charms, and sorcery, and astrology."

The Sinhalese Buddhist "moves in a world haunted and beset by the supernatural, breathing an atmosphere heavy with fears and suspicions.

"To all this Karma is beside the mark. ...'Buddha,' says the genuine Buddhist, 'is for the other world.' Merit and demerit are shadowy matters, compared with the pressing and urgent realities over which the demon and the sorcerer preside."*

The Sinhalese believe that their island was originally peopled by Yakkhos (demons), who had the power of rendering themselves invisible. Buddha's victories over these demoniac beings are related in the *Mahawanso*. 'It was known (by inspiration) by the vanquisher that in Lanka, filled by Yakkhos, would be the place where his religion would be glorified. In like manner, knowing that in the centre of Lanka, on the delightful bank of a river,... in the agreeable Mahanaga garden...

* *Missionary Conference in 1894*, p. 103.

there was a great assembly of the principal yakkhos...the deity of happy advent, approaching that great congregation...immediately over their heads hovering in the air,...struck terror into them by rains, tempests, and darkness...The yakkhos, overwhelmed with awe, supplicated of the vanquisher to be relieved from their terror. The consoling vanquisher thus replied; 'I will release ye yakkhos, from this your terror and affliction; give unto me here by unanimous consent a place for me to alight on.' All these yakkhos replied: 'Lord, we confer on thee the whole of Lanka; grant thou comfort to us.' The vanquisher thereupon dispelling their terror and cold shivering, and spreading his carpet of skin on the spot bestowed on him, he there seated himself. He then caused the aforesaid carpet, refulgent with a fringe of flames, to extend itself on all sides; they, scorched by the flames, (receding) stood around on the shores (of the island) terrified. The saviour then caused the delightful island of Giri to approach for them. As soon as they transferred themselves thereto (to escape the conflagration), he restored it to its former position."*

The first inhabitants of Ceylon were very rude, little better than savages. They were called *yakkhos,* not because they were demons, but because they were demon-worshippers. That they were only ordinary men and women, is shown by Wijeyo, the first king of Ceylon and his companions intermarrying with them and having children, just as is the case with foreigners at present.

A good description of demon worship in Ceylon by Don Andris DeSilva Goonaratna, Mudaliar, is given in the Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society for 1865-66. The following account is mainly taken from an abridgment of it by Moncure Conway.

*Turnour's Mahawanso, pp. 3, 6, quoted by Moncure Conway, *Demonology*, Vol. I. p. 152.

The Siamese demons are said to be in some cases 12 miles high. In Ceylon they range from 2 to 400 feet in height, and are so numerous that a Pali Buddhist book exhorts people not to throw stones, lest they should injure one of these harmless starveling ghosts, who die many times of hunger, and revive to suffer on in expiation of their sins in a previous existence. They are harmless in one sense, but filthy; and bad smells are personified in them. Their king, Wessamuni, has forbidden them to satisfy themselves directly upon their victims, but by inflicting diseases they are supposed to receive an imaginative satisfaction somewhat like that of eating people.

Names of Devils. — The devil-dancers have invented several devils to frighten their dupes to employ them.

Reeri is the demon of blood-disease. His form is that of a man with the face of a monkey; he is fiery red, rides on a red bull, and all diseases of the blood are attributed to him. Reeri has 18 different disguises. He is supposed to be present at every deathbed in the form of a delighted pigmy, one span and six inches high. On such occasions he bears a cock in one hand, a club in the other, and in his mouth a corpse.

Women are most afraid of the *Reeri Yakka* supposed to cause the flow of blood after childbirth. Sometimes the blood fills the womb, and the woman dies. The true *Reeri Yakka* is the ignorant midwife. The very bad custom prevails with them of tearing away the after-birth as soon as the child is born. This causes a flow of blood from the blood-vessels. With a good midwife, no *Reeri Yakka* gives any trouble.

Maha Sohan is the 'great grave-yard demon.' He resides in a hill where he is supposed to surround himself with carcases.

He is 122 feet high, has 4 hands and 3 eyes, and a red skin. He has the head of a bear; the legend being that while he quarrelled with another giant his head was knocked off, and the god Senasura was gracious enough to tear off the head of a bear and clap it on the decapitated giant. His priest frightens him with a repetition of this catastrophe if he does not spare any threatened victim who has called in his aid. Except for this timidity about his head, Maha Sohan is formidable, being chief of 30,000 demons. But curiously enough he is said to choose for his steeds the more innocent animals,—goat, deer, horse, elephant, and hog.

Huniyan Yaksheya is another dreaded devil. He is represented with long tusks, and encircled with cobras.

One of the demons most feared in Ceylon is the 'Foreign Demon' Morotoo, said to have come from the coast of Malabar, and from his residence in a tree disseminated diseases which could not be cured until the queen being afflicted, a priest was found able to master him.

The great demon of disease in Ceylon is entitled *Maha Kola Sanni Yakseya.* His father, a king, ordered his queen to be put to death in the belief that she had been faithless to him. Her body was to be cut in two pieces, one of which was to be hung upon an *ukberiya* tree, the other to be thrown at its foot to the dogs. The queen before her execution said, 'If this charge be false, may the child in my womb be born this instant a demon, and may that demon destroy the whole of this city and its unjust king.' As soon as the executioners had finished their work, the two severed parts of the queen's body reunited, a child was born who completely devoured his mother and then repaired to the graveyard (Sohon), where for a time he fattened on corpses. Then he proceeded to inflict mortal diseases upon the city, and had nearly depopulated it when the gods Iswara and Sakkra interfered, descending to subdue him in the disguise of mendicants.

The first of the attendants of this formidable avenger of his mother's wrongs is named *Bhoota Sanni Yakseya,* 'Demon of Madness.' The whole demonolatry and

devil-dancing of the Ceylon are so insane, that one is not surprised that this Bhoota had but little special development.

Gopolu bears the general name of the 'Cattle Demon'. He is said to have been the twin of the demigod Mangara by a queen on the Coromandel Coast. The mother died, and a cow suckled the twins, but afterwards they quarrelled, and Gopolu being slain was transformed into a demon. He now sends all cattle diseases.

Kalu Kumara Yakshaya, the 'Black Princely Devil,' is supposed to have seven different forms—prince of fire, of flowers, of groves, of graves, of eye-ointments, of the smooth body, and of sexuality. He is said to have been a Buddhist priest who by exceeding asceticism and accumulated merit had gained the power to fly, but passion for a beautiful woman caused him to fall. The disappointment made him a demon. He is supposed to kill infants and devour them.

Bahirawa, a Sinhalese demon, is supposed to reside in a hill of the same name, which overlooks Kandy. The legend runs that the astrologers told a king whose queen was afflicted by successive miscarriages, that she would never be delivered of a healthy child unless a virgin was sacrificed annually on the top of this hill. This being done, several children were born to him. When his queen was advanced in years, the king discontinued this observance, and consequently many diseases fell upon the royal family and the city, after which the annual sacrifice was resumed, and continued until 1815, when the English occupied Kandy. The method of sacrifice was to bind a young girl to a stake on the top of the hill with jungle-creepers. Beside her, on an altar, were placed boiled rice and flowers; incantations were uttered and the girl left, to be generally found dead of fright in the morning. An old woman, who in early years, had undergone this ordeal, survived, and her safety no doubt co-operated with English authority to diminish the popular fear of

Bahirawa, but still few Sinhalese would be find courageous enough to ascend the hill at night.*

Selkirk gives the following account of a devil ceremony in the Southern Province of Ceylon:

"The way in which a devil ceremony is performed is this. Near the house are three small enclosures, made with sticks, and over each a white cloth is spread. These enclosures are decorated with cocoa-nut leaves and areca-nut flowers, and within each there is a small altar, on which is spread a piece of plantain leaf. The priest offers on it various kinds of flowers, and sandal-wood ground with water, and sprinkles consecrated water over them. He then takes some powdered resin, and having repeated over it incantations, sprinkles it on burning coals taken from the fire in a vessel which is placed under the altar, and the smoke from it rises up around the offerings of flowers and sandal-wood. After this he begins to sing and dance to the beat of the tom-tom. The priest is dressed in a clean white cloth, and a woman's jacket. He has several small bells tied round his legs and a turban round his head, and in this attire he dances and sings with a lighted torch in his hand. The people then tie a small bag of paddy to one end of a stick, and a cocoa-nut to the other, and the priest offers it to the gods in the name of the sick person. Boiled rice, and a curry made of seven different vegetables, sauce, fish, meal, and dried seeds, are then offered, and the priest repeats more charms, offers incense and sings and dances as before. After this he takes 12 small lighted torches, and fastening them to a small piece of a plantain tree, places it on one end of a long pole, the other end of which is stuck in the ground. These 12 lights are intended to represent 12 gods, and while they are burning, the priest takes three betel leaves and warms them at the torches, and throws them up at three different times: if they fall on the glossy side, it is a good omen; if on the other it is a bad omen. At each different time, that the priest makes the offering, he goes with it to the sick person, and receives a piece of money, declaring that the illness will entirely leave with it. He then puts on a black jacket, and takes a lighted torch in each hand, and having painted his face, begins to dance in a very violent manner. A mat is then spread on the ground, and the priest having in his mouth a torch lighted at both ends, lies down on the mat, and puts him-

CEYLON DEVIL DANCER.

* Abridged from Conway's Demonology, Vol. I. pp. 260-266; Vol. II. p. 408.

self into different postures. While lying on his *back* on the mat, he takes powdered resin, and throws it on the lighted torch in his mouth, and according to the direction that the smoke takes in ascending, he decides from what quarter the devil comes that is afflicting the sick person. He then

MASK USED BY DEVIL DANCERS.

takes a handful of powdered resin, and having repeated several charms, puts it on live coals and allows the smoke to come in his face; then in a few minutes, he begins to stagger and run about the place as if mad, and when he comes out again he is seized by two persons, who say to him, "We pray the gods to declare through this man what is the cause of this person's sickness, and by what means it may be cured." When this is asked, the priest says that such and such devils have occasioned the illness, and that it may be cured by such and such offerings and ceremonials.

Fatigue and exposure to the night air sometimes cause the death of the sick person. The excuse is made that his time had come, and that nothing could save him.

Some of the ceremonies employed are very absurd.

Attempts are made to cheat the demon. The devil dancer sometimes personates the sick man and pretends to die. He is then carried with lamentation, and supposed to be buried. At other times a rude image is made and treated similarly. These people must suppose the demon to be more stupid than a crow, for it knows the difference between a living and dead man, between a corpse and a bundle of sticks.

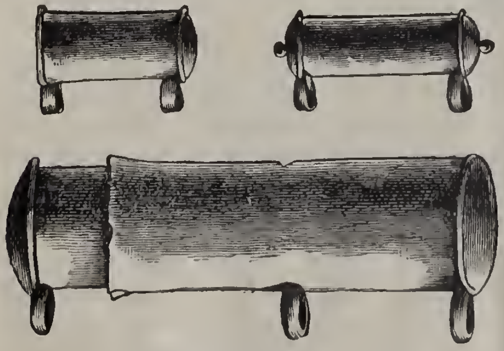
When a person gets sick, a devil priest * often says that some one has practised charms against him, made an image, pierced it with nails of five metals, and buried it. The devil priest promises, for a good present, through his ceremonies, to discover the image, and cause the death of the

* *Kattadiya* in Sinhalese.

enemy who made it. Pretending to be inspired by the demon, he says, "Go and dig at such a place, and you will find the image." The people do so eagerly, find the image, and praise the skill of the devil priest. The explanation is simple. The devil priest himself buried the image before the commencement of the ceremony.

At another time the devil priest pretends to expel the demon by his charms. He orders him away, speaking very boldly. The demon is frightened, and promises to leave. The devil priest asks for a sign that the promise will be kept. The demon says that he will break the branch of such and such a tree. The people run to the tree and find the branch broken. This is looked upon as a proof that the demon has left the sick person, and the devil priest receives a handsome present. The truth is that the devil priest himself broke the branch before the ceremony.

Many of the Sinhalese wear charms on some part of their bodies to preserve them from injury. Females either wear them round their necks, or round their arms above the elbow. The men have theirs tied round their loins very tight with a piece of



CHARM CASES.

strong twine. They are written on a piece of paper which is folded in as small a compass as possible, and enclosed in a small tube of iron or brass. Parents buy them for their children, and put them on them as soon as they are born.

There are some Sinhalese still so barbarous that in cases of sickness they do not give medicine, but simply resort to charms and devil dances.

Others, not quite so rude, give medicines, but also employ ceremonies, as they think the former alone insufficient. Most Sinhalese belong to this class.

Demon Worship in Burma.

Although Buddhism has been the professed religion of the Burmese for more than 2000 years, as in Ceylon, the old demon worship still retains a firm hold on the minds of the people. All Burmese, from the highest to the lowest, priests and laymen, take part in demon worship. The propitiating of the evil spirits is a question of daily concern to the lower class Burmese, while the worship at the pagoda is only thought of once a week. For the demon may prove destructive and hostile at any time, whereas the acquisition of merit at the pagoda is a thing which may be set about in a business-like way, and at proper and convenient seasons.

Demons are called *nats* in Burmese. Some suppose that the name is derived from the Sanskrit *nath*, 'lord,' but this is uncertain. Their worship has nothing to do with Buddhism, and is denounced by the more earnest priests as being heretical and contrary to the teaching of the Lord Buddha.

The Burmese have doubtless been influenced by the Karens, Kachins, and other wild tribes, who have no other form of belief except in malevolent beings who must be looked up to with fear, and propitiated by regular offerings. The people do not want to have anything to do with the nats; all they seek is to be let alone. The bamboo pipes containing arrack, the

bones of sacrificial animals, the hatchets, swords, spears, bows and arrows that line the way to a Kachin village, are placed there, not with the idea of attracting the spirits, but of preventing them from coming right among the houses in search of their requirements. If they want to drink, the arrack has been poured out, and the bamboo pipe is there in evidence of the libation; the blood-stained skulls of oxen, pigs, and the feathers of fowls show that there has been no stint of meat offering; should the nats wax quarrelsome and wish to fight, there are the axes and swords with which to commence the fray. Only let them be grateful, and leave their trembling worshippers in peace and quietness.

At the extremity of every village, there is a shrine for the nat or nats in the neighbourhood. This varies much in size and character. Sometimes it is a mere bamboo cage, hung on the pipal or other tree, or slung on a post, a bird-cage kind of construction, with an image inside, and a little hole through which the superstitious can introduce their offerings,—tiny water-pots, oil-lamps, and little morsels of food. Often, if the village is larger, the shrine is much more pretentious. There is a large roof, gabled, and supported with red posts, the platform ornamented, with a raised seat at one end, on which a representation of the nat is placed at the feast time, which, in imitation of the pagoda feast, occurs at a regular fixed season. At other times these images are kept stowed away in an adjoining chamber, built for the purpose.

Each person is supposed to have his nat. The house has also a guardian nat. For his comfort the tops of all the posts of the house are covered with a hood of white cotton cloth, for it is in this situation that he usually takes up his abode. In almost every house at the end of the verandah in front, there is a water-pot, full of water, over which certain spells have been uttered by the astrologer or priest of the district. This water, which is replenished once a month or oftener in cases of danger from disease or when a member of the family is absent on a journey, is every now and then sprinkled about the house as a protection against evil spirits. When the rains are over, offerings of money, rice, eggs, jaggery, and fruits are made that the nat may keep away fever from the household. It must not be supposed that the nat has necessarily any affection for those who have built the place where he has taken up his abode. He probably regards them only with cold indifference, however generous they may be in their offerings, and were he not propitiated by these gifts, he would almost certainly display his anger by doing the inhabitants some grievous injury.

Beyond the demon of the house, there is the guardian nat of the village. None of the lower class Talaings would ever think of eating a morsel without first holding up his platter in the air, and breathing out a prayer to the village nat. A feast must be held every three or four years in honour of this nat, at which a woman, called the nat's wife, dances. This is done in order that sickness may be kept away. Should an epidemic actually break out, a very elaborate ceremony is gone through. Probably first of all the figure of the demon is painted on an ordinary earthenwere water-pot, and this is solemnly smashed to pieces about sun-down with a heavy stick. As soon as it gets dark, the entire populace break out into yells, and make as much noise generally as they can compass, with the view of scaring away the evil spirit who has brought the disease. This is repeated on three several nights, and if it is not effective the monks are called in to give their assistance. The head of the kyoung, with his followings, repeat the Ten precepts and chant one

of the sermons of the Lord Buddha, the same by the preaching of which he drove away the pestilence which was devastating the country of Waythalee. If this last ceremony is not effectual, the village is abandoned for a time. Before they return again, the yellow-robed monks, in recognition of much alms, read the Law up and down the street between the houses. When they have gone back to the monastery, the nat's shrine is repaired, and abundant offerings deposited. The people then enter upon their ordinary pursuits as if no interruption whatever had occurred.

When a leading man in a hamlet is sick, or more often when there is a contagious disease, a great feast of cooked rice and roasted fowls is heaped up on a platform specially erected for the purpose some distance outside the village. Every one in the place is required to have some part in the ceremony. Some dress themselves in a fantastic way, and pretend to be demons. Others feign to be dogs and rush about on all fours, barking and howling; others represent pigs, and grunt and poke about with their noses in the ground.

After a certain time, the villagers come out in band, and through one or more spokesmen, demand of the possessed whether those lying sick at home will recover, and whether the evil spirits are pleased with the offerings.

Some nats are celebrated far and wide. One lives in the water and causes death. Another is a great drunkard, to whom arrack, in large quantities, is offered. A third nat lives in jungles, and shakes those he meets so that they get mad; a fourth flies about in the clouds to spy out men whom he may snap up.

When a Burmese starts on a journey he hangs a bunch of plantains on the pole of the buffalo cart or the stem of the boat, to conciliate any spirit whose beat he may intrude upon. The fisherman makes offerings every time he launches his canoe; the lonely hunter in the forest deposits some rice and ties together a few leaves whenever he comes across some large and imposing tree, lest there be a nat dwelling there.

There are abundance of experts who profess to be able to explain signs and to control the evil spirits. Every district possesses its spirit-woman who dances at the nat feasts, and at ordinary times is consulted by the superstitious on all kinds of subjects connected with their trade. She is asked where so-and-so lately deceased is, to which world he has migrated; where absent persons are and what they are doing, &c. There are men who claim similar knowledge, and are equally abundant. When a Burmese is dying a Buddhist priest is sometimes sent for, not to give advice or comfort, but by his presence to drive away demons.

Charms kept in a case or bag may be lost. This is impossible in the case of most Burmese, for they have them tattooed on the arms, back, chest, or even on the top of the head, which is shaved for the purpose. These figures are of all kinds—lizards, birds, mystic words and squares, rings, images of Buddha, and sometimes merely a few scattered dots. Here the colouring matter is almost always vermilion.

Some of these tattooed charms are supposed to prevent a person from feeling pain when beaten, others guard against danger from snake-bite, musket-shots, drowning, the spells of wizards, and evil spirits. It does not matter to the Burmese although persons having these tattooed charms are shot or drowned. Their belief in their efficacy is practically ineradicable.*

* *The Burman.* By Sway Yoe. Vol. I. pp. 276-289 (abridged).

Demon Worship in China.

In worldly matters the Chinese are among the shrewdest people in the world; but in religion they act liko children. Their chief religion is tho worship of ancestors. They think that they can send them money, clothes, horses, and carriages by burning paper cut into their shapes.

Next to the worship of ancestors is their dread of evil spirits. The Chinese believe that they are constantly surrounded by millions of malignant spirits, seeking to trouble them. They are concealed at every corner, wandering through the air, and their weird sounds are heard in the darkness of the night as the wind howls about the roof. The dread of spirits is the nightmare of the Chinaman's life. Some of the demons are better known than others.

LITTLE BLACK DEVIL.

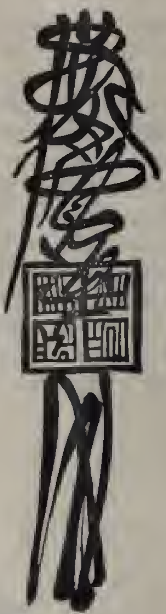
TALL WHITE DEVIL.

One is the Little Black Devil; another is the Tall White Devil. Various means arc employed by the Chinese to protect themselves against these supposed evil spirits. In marriage processions, to prevent harm from demons lurking on tho road, a large piece of pork is carried in front. The demons devour the pork, and the procession passes safely.

Door gods are a common defenco against tho entering of ovil spirits into a houso. It is said that an emperor had a dream in which he was informed that evil spirits were attempting to invade his palace. To

prevent their entrance, he commanded two of his bravest soldiers to keep guard at the palace gate. The spirits, frightened by their warlike appearance, were afraid to enter, and since the death of these famous generals, it is said that their pictures have been found to be equally efficacious.

DOOR GODS.



CHINESE CHARM.

As further precautions against the admission of devils, there is always a screen in front of a door. As demons are supposed to travel in straight lines, the roads are also made narrow and winding to intercept them. To prevent the entering of spirits by windows, there are only high walls outside. All these things prevent the circulation of fresh air, and tend to render the houses unhealthy.

Lastly, charms are stuck all over the houses. They consist of black scratches which are sold by the priests as infallible preservatives against demons. There is a regular trade in them, and it is one means by which priests gain a livelihood.

Tibet.

Tibet, the highest country in the world, lies north of India on the other side of the Himalayas. It is under the Chinese, who have jealously sought to exclude all foreigners. Ignorant of the knowledge possessed by enlightened countries, the Tibetans are steeped in foolish superstitions. One of their firmest belief is that they are continually exposed to the attacks of malignant demons, and a great part of their time and money are devoted to measures supposed to ward them off.

The monks or priests in Tibet are called *Lamas,* which has the same meaning as *guru.* The Lamas believe that the hermits

in the mountains and the monks in their cells can banish drought, control the sun, and stay the storm. Every monastery in Tibet keeps a sorcerer, consults him, and follows his advice upon most matters. The chief wizards are called 'Defenders of the Faith.' The highest of them is the Government oracle, who is consulted on all important state occasions. Their fantastic equipment and their frantic bearing their cries and howling seem clearly to identify them with the devil dancers. The belief both in ghosts and witchcraft and the practice of exorcism are deeply rooted in the country.

The chief sorcerers are called 'the revered protectors of religion,' and are believed to be incarnations of malignant spirits, called 'Kings,' who seem to be spirits of demonified heroes, and still the object of very active popular worship. These king-demons are alleged to have been originally 5 brothers who came from Northern Mongolia. The chief sorcerer to Government was originally a god of the Turki tribes, and was named the 'White overcast Sky.' He was brought to Tibet, where he became incarnate, and the man possessed by his spirit was styled 'The Religious Noble.' He married and became a recognised oracle, with hereditary descent.

The commonest rites are 'the closing of the doors to the demons of the Earth and Sky;' the exorcism of the disease demon, the death ceremonies as a whole, expelling the death demon, and the exorcism of ghosts.

Barring the Door against the Earth Demons.—The most malignant of the earth spirits infest certain trees and rocks, which are always studiously shunned and respected. The earth-demons are innumerable, but they are all under the authority of 'Old Mother Khön-ma.' She rides upon a ram, is dressed in golden yellow robes, and in her hand she holds a golden noose.

To exclude the earth demons, a ram's skull is provided, into which some gold leaf, silver, precious stones, as well as portions of food, are put. In addition, there are on separate slips of wood the following images, etc.: 1. a man's picture; 2. a woman's picture with a spindle in her hand; 3. a house picture; 4. a tree picture; 5 various signs.

The whole erection is now fixed to the outside of the house upon the door. The object of these figures of a man, wife and house is to deceive the demons should they come, and to mislead them into the belief that the foregoing pictures are the inmates of the house; so that they may wreak their wrath on these bits of wood, and so save the human occupants.

Demons of the Sky.—These are under the control of the Grandfather of the 3 worlds, who is represented as an old man with snow-white hair, dressed in white robes, and riding on the white dog of the sky; and in his hand he carries a crystal rod. "The closing of the doors of the Sky," is addressed to him.

The images, &c., are exactly similar to those used for the earth doors, the only difference being that in this case a dog's skull is used.

The demons who produce disease short of actual death, are called Shé, and are exorcised by an elaborate ceremony in which a variety of images and offerings are made. The officiating Lama invokes his protecting demon, and thereby assuming spiritually the dread guise of this evil king, he orders out the disease demon under the threat of getting himself eaten up by the awful demon who now possesses the Lama. The demons are stabbed by the mystic dagger; charmed seeds and pebbles, consecrated by muttering spells, are then thrown at the demons. The charmed seeds are kept in a small horn, carved with scorpions, and other objects.

The ritual itself as a curious mixture of

A LAMA FRIGHTENING DEMONS.

Indian magic, Chinese astrology, and necromancy.*

The demons are said to dislike loud noises. To drive them away, a Lama has a trumpet made of a man's thigh bone which he blows. He has also a sacred drum, shaped like two hemispheres, joined on their convex sides, and encircled by sacred shells. It is sounded by means of buttons attached to two hanging strips of leather. The sound made is out of all proportion to the size of the drum. It may be heard at a great distance and is thought to be highly efficacious in frightening away evil spirits.†

Siberia.

Siberia is a very large country, occupying the whole of northern Asia. There are some Russian settlers from Europe, but it is chiefly occupied by wandering tribes in a low state of civilization. Among the latter, demon worship is the chief superstition. The demon priests, called Shamans, are very much like the devil-dancers of South India and Ceylon.

When a man falls sick, he is supposed to be attacked by a demon, and the Shaman is called to drive him out. There is a distinct spirit for every disease who must be propitiated in a particular manner. The Shaman puts on a large bearskin cloak, which jingles with bells, pieces of iron, brass, or anything which will help, when shaken, to make a noise; the whole sometimes weighing as much as 50 seers. He begins by singing in a monotonous murmur, and drinking brandy. Both patient and doctor are usually decorated with strips of wood or shavings, hanging round the waist and head. By the side of the patient are placed idols and brandy. The Shaman sits on one side, and the audience on the other. He approaches, drinks more brandy, begins to sing and jingle his bells, and gives brandy to the spectators. On

* Foretelling events through the dead.

† Abridged from Waddell's *Tibet*.

A SHAMAN.

the table are placed idols, fish, a squirrel's skin, millet and brandy, and a dog is tied under the table. The eatables are offered to the idols, and then distributed to be consumed by all present. Meanwhile the Shaman twists his body, and dances like one possessed, and howls to such an extent that Chinese merchants, who have come out of curiosity, have been known to flee in terror. He also beats a small drum with jingling bells, and sometimes falls prostrate as if in communion with the spirits. This kind of thing sometimes goes on for 3 or 4 nights, as long, probably, as provisions and brandy hold out, after which the patient is left to believe that he will get well. The Shaman receives his fee, which may be a reindeer, a dog, fish, brandy, or whatever the patient can afford. The Shamans possess great power over the deluded people. A Shaman who has performed wonderful cures receives after death a magnificent tomb to his memory.

There are also women called Shamanins.

In some cases, the Shamans make the people believe that the sickness is caused by demons entering the body as stones or thorns. The Shamans pretend to take them out, and so cure the disease. They hide them in their dress beforehand, and after certain ceremonies pretend to suck them out, showing them as proofs of what they say. As they are paid so much for each, they sometimes claim to have brought half a dozen out of a man's stomach.

East African Superstitions.

"The East African," says Captain Burton, "has two main articles of belief. The first is demonology; the second is witchcraft.

"A prey to base passions and melancholy godless fears, the East African peoples with malevolent beings the invisible world. The rites of his dark and deadly superstition are all intended to avert evils from himself by transferring them to others: hence the witchcraft and magic which flow naturally from the system of demonology. Men rarely die without the wife or children, the kindred or slaves, being accused of having compassed their destruction; while the trial and the conviction are of the most arbitrary nature. Yet witchcraft is practised by thousands with the firmest belief

AFRICAN DEVIL-DANCER.

in their own powers; and though frightful tortures await the wizard and the witch who have been condemned for the destruction of chief or elder, the vindictiveness of the negro drives him readily to the malevolent practices of sorcery. Even in the presence of torture and the instant advance of death, the sorcerer and sorceress will not only confess, but boast of and believe in their own criminality. 'Verily I slew such a one!—I brought about the disease of such another!'—these are their demented vaunts, the offspring of mental weakness."

Magicians swarm throughout the country. The calling is hereditary, the eldest or cleverest son succeeds to his father's function. The power of the magician, called the mganga, is great. He is treated as a sultan, whose word is law, and as a giver of life and death. He is addressed by a kingly title, and he is permitted to wear the chieftain's badge, made of the base of a conical shell. He is also known by a number of small greasy and blackened gourds, filled with physic and magic, hanging round his waist, and by a little more of the usual grime—sanctity and dirt being connected in Africa as in India. These men are sent for from village to village, and receive as fees sheep and goats, cattle and provisions. The greatest danger to them is an excess of fame. A celebrated magician rarely, if ever, dies a natural death: too much is expected from him, and a severe disappointment leads to consequences more violent than usual.

The office of the magician includes many duties. The same man is a physician by natural and supernatural means, a medicine-man, a detector of sorcery, a rain-maker, a conjurer, a soothsayer, and a prophet.

As a rule, all diseases are attributed to evil influence. The magician is expected to heal the patients by expelling the demon. The unwelcome visitant must be charmed away by drumming, dancing, and drinking. The spirit is then enticed from the body of the possessed into some inanimate substance, which he will conde-

scend to inhabit. This, called a stool, may be two or more bits of wood bound together by a strip of snake's skin, a lion's or a leopard's claw, and other similar articles. Paper is still considered a great medicine by some of the tribes, who will barter valuable goods for a little bit: the great desideratum of the charm, in fact, appears to be its rarity, or, the difficulty of obtaining it. Hence also the habit of driving nails and hanging rags upon trees.

There are other mystical means of restoring the sick to health. Several little sticks, like matches, are daubed with red clay, and marks are made with them upon the patient's body. A charm is chanted, the possessed one responds, and at the end of every verse an evil spirit flies from him, the signal being a stick cast by the magician upon the ground. Some unfortunately have as many as a dozen haunting ghosts, each of whom has his charm; the magician demanding a reward for each expulsion.

Some of the Africans believe that a malevolent magician can change a man after death into a lion, a leopard, or a hyæna. Others believe that a chief may change himself into a lion, kill any one he chooses, and then return to the human form. Some negroes hold that while persons are still living, they may enter into lions and alligators, and then return to their own bodies.*

Smelling out a thief is another African superstition. A man to whom a rope is tied, pretends to find out the guilty person.

Devil Dance in West Africa.

The picture represents a devil dance at Loongi, the capital of Bullom, West Coast of Africa. It took place at night. The scene which presents itself to any one

* Burton's *Central Africa*, Vol. II. pp. 350-356 (abridged).

SMELLING OUT A THIEF.

WEST AFRICAN DEVIL DANCE.

coming suddenly out of the darkness into the noise and glare is decidedly uncanny. In the centre of a circle which fills the courtyard is the devil-dancer, with a great crocodile's head, long grass, looking like hair, depending from his body and legs, and swaying as he moves, leaps, beating time with his feet to the beat of the drums. Women, in a double row, wail a chant and strike their palms together in slow rhythmical measure, those in the front row bowing down between each beat. Young men, in long robes and caps, wail with the women. They look dazed to begun with, but gradually work themselves up into a phrenzy. The dark faces, the monotonous wailing cry, the thrumming of the drums, the rattle of the clackers, and the beat of

the devil dancer's feet, make a strange scene.

When peace is declared between two tribes, the peace devil-dancer comes leaping into the town. If he stumbles or falls, it is considered a bad omen, and he is put to death.

The Graphic 1890.

WITCH-FINDERS OR WITCH-DOCTORS.

Distinction between a Devil-Dancer and a Witch.—Savages do not believe in natural death. If a man, however old, dies without being wounded, they conclude that his death has been caused by an evil spirit or some one who has bewitched him. For diseases caused by evil spirits, the proper cure is to get rid of them. For this purpose a devil-dancer is employed. He talks to them, coaxes or threatens them; makes offerings to them, entices or drives them out of the sick men, and persuades them to take up their abode somewhere else.

A witch, on the other hand, is a man or woman* who tries by magical means to do harm to some one. The witch may cause disease among human beings or cattle, or otherwise injure them. On account of their supposed powers, people employ them to remove some enemy. Hence a devil-dancer may be considered as useful in his way, while the witch is everywhere detested.

Means employed by Witches.—The common belief is that a person may be injured by anything belonging to him, as his hair, the parings of his nails, &c. Among one tribe a chief is followed by a man with a spittoon into which he spits, lest any one should get hold of his spittle and thus do him harm. Even an image of the person may have the same influence. In both east and west the ignorant believed that if an image were made and stuck full of pins, the person represented would die in great agony. Another method was to make a wax image and place it before a fire causing it to melt, upon which the victim would waste away from disease.

* Wizard is properly applied to the male; but witch, in popular use, may refer to either sex.

Witch-Finding in India.

The grand remedy for witchcraft in India is to kill the witch. Among the Kols the whole family was put to death in the belief that witches breed witches. Mrs. Mason describes the following case which happened among the Karens, a wild tribe in Burma:

"There was a poor childless Karen who retired with his wife to the forest, and cultivated a small patch of land there alone. After awhile a man died in the neighbourhood of congestion of the liver. Dark suspicions began to be whispered that the old man of the jungle knew more than he ought to know of the matter. Soon he was openly pronounced a wizard, and his precincts enchanted ground. After this, whenever any singular death occurred in the neighbourhood, it was laid at his door. Finally, a child died of an unaccountable disease, and, lo, when its body was burned, a portion of the kidneys was found unconsumed. This to a Karen is proof positive. The neighbours, therefore, went up from all parts to the magistrate, clamorous for the old man's death. They found out that the English law would give no help, so three stout young men, arming themselves with axes and knives, hastened to the old man's hut, and there in broad day, they *hewed* the wretched man to pieces as they would a hog. When arraigned for trial, they at once confessed, producing the unburned kidneys as proof that they had acted only as public benefactors."*

* *Civilizing Mountain Men*, pp. 119, 120.

The witch is regarded as simply a mischievous animal, that deserves to be killed like a man-eating tiger.

The grand complaint brought against the English Government by some rude tribes is that they are not now allowed to kill witches as they did before. Sir Alfred Lyall says: "It is probable that in no other town or country has witchcraft ever been so comfortably practised as it is now in India under British rule. The Indian sorcerer lives under laws which, instead of condemning him, interfere actively to protect him from molestation, and are much more prone to hang witch-finders than witches. Of course the witch is punished when he takes to poisoning or pure swindling; but so long as his methods are simply magical, that is, so long as he pretends to work evil in a way not admitted to be physically possible, by sticking pins in an wax figure, brewing in a cauldron, burying a fowl's head downwards, howling out incantations and the like, it is not easy for an English judge to punish the man because he can make his neighbours believe that these operations affect the climate, the cattle, or the health of any one against whom they are directed."*

Modes of Witch-finding.—Witches were discovered in India much as they were in Europe during the Middle Ages. They are thus described by Sir A. C. Lyall:

"The ordeal by water is universal among the barbarious Non-Aryan tribes of Central India, from the Bheels in the west country to the wild men in the almost unexplored jungles of Bustar and the far east, towards the Bay of Bengal. Here is a description of one water test, taken a few years ago from the mouth of an expert witch-finder among the Bheels, who got into a scrape for applying it to an old woman.

"A bamboo is stuck up in the middle of any piece of water. The accused is taken to it, lays hold of it, and by it descends to the bottom. In the meantime one of the villagers shoots an arrow from his bow and another runs to pick it up and bring it back to the place, whence it was shot. If the woman is able to remain under water until this is done, she is declared innocent, but if she comes up to breathe before the arrow is returned into the bowman's hand, she is a true witch, and must be swung as such."

In the case from which this account is taken the woman failed in the test, and was accordingly swung to and fro, roped up to a tree, with a bandage of red pepper on her eyes; but it is obvious that this kind of ordeal, like almost all primitive ordeals, is contrived so as to depend for its effect much upon the manner in which it is conducted, whereby the operator's favour becomes worth gaining. A skilful archer will shoot as far as he chooses.

Another mode of trial as by sewing the suspected one in a sack, which is let down into water about 3 feet deep. If the person inside the sack can get his head above water, he is a witch. An English officer once saved a witch in India from ducking to death, by insisting that the witch-finder and the accusers generally should go through precisely the same ordeal which they had prescribed. This idea hit off the crowd's notion of fair play, and the trial was adjourned *sine die* by consent.

Another ordeal is by heat, as for instance, the picking of a coin out of burning oil. But the question extraordinary is by swinging on a sacred tree, or by flogging with switches of a particular wood. In 1865, a woman, suspected of bringing cholera into the village, was deliberately beaten to death with rods of the castor-oil tree, which is excellent for purging witchcraft. It is usual also to knock out the front teeth of a notorious witch; the prac-

* *Asiatic Studies*, p. 96.

tice appears to be connected with the belief well known in all countries, that witches assume animal shapes. A good many years ago, there was an old man practising as a physician near Srinagar in the Himalayas, who was notorious as a sorcerer, insomuch that his reputation of having devoured many persons under the form of a tiger cost him most of his teeth, which were extracted by the Raja who then held that country, so as to render him less formidable during his constant metamorphoses. Shaving the heads of female witches, is very common among the tribes infested by sorcerers; it is employed as an antidote, not merely as a degrading punishment, so that one is tempted to trace its origin to some recondite power residing in the hair."*

Sir A. C. Lyall thus refers to witchcraft among the Banjaras: "The Banjaras of Central India, who formerly carried all the grain traffic of the country on vast droves of bullocks, are terribly vexed by witchcraft, to which their wandering and precarious existence especially exposes them in the shape of fever, rheumatism, and dysentery. Solemn inquiries are still held in the wild jungles where these people camp out like gipsies, and many an unlucky hag has been strangled by sentence of their secret tribunals. In difficult cases they consult the most eminent of their spiritual advisers or holy men, who may be within reach; but it is usual, as a proper precaution against mistakes which even learned divines may commit, to buy some trifling article on the road to the consultation, and to try the diviner's faculty by making him guess what it was, before proceeding to matters of life or death. The saint works himself into a state of demoniac possession, and gasps out some woman's name; she is killed by her nearest relative, or allowed to commit suicide, unless indeed her family are able to make it worth the diviner's while to have another fit, and to detect some one else."*

* *Asiatic Studies*, pp. 83,84.

Witch-finding in Chota Nagpore.—Chota Nagpore is a large province to the west of Bengal, chiefly inhabited by the Kols and other rude aboriginal tribes who had no written language. Dalton, in his *Ethnology of Bengal*, states that a belief in witchcraft pervades all classes. He says:

"All disease in men or animals is attributed to one of two causes, the wrath of some evil spirit which has to be appeased or to the spell of some witch or sorcerer who should be destroyed or driven out of the house. In the latter case a witch-finder is employed to divine who has cast the spell, and various modes of divination are resorted to. One of the most common is the test of the stone and 'paila.' The latter is a large wooden cup, shaped like a half cocoanut, used as a measure of grain. It is placed under a flat stone as a pivot for the stone to turn on. A boy is then seated on the stone, supporting himself by his hands, and the names of all the people in the neighbourhood are slowly pronounced, and as each name is uttered a few grains of rice are thrown at the boy. When they come to the name of a witch or wizard, the stone moves and the boy rolls off; this, no doubt is the effect of the boy's falling into a state of coma, and losing the power of supporting himself with his hands.

"In former times the person denounced and all his family were put to death in the belief that witches breed witches, and sorcerers. The taint is in the blood. When during the mutinies the Singbhum District was left for a short time without officers, a terrible raid was made against all who for years had been suspected of dealings with the evil one, and the most atrocious murders were committed. Young men were told off for the duty by the elders; neither

**Asiatic Studies*, pp. 88,89.

sex nor age was spared. When order was restored the crimes were brought to light, and the active perpetrators were condignly punished, and since then we have not only had no recurrence of witch murderers, but the superstition itself is dying out in the Kolhar. In other districts accusations of witchcraft are still frequently made, and the persons denounced are subject to much ill-usage if they escape with their lives. Some of the witch-finders, instead of giving the name of the person who has cast the evil eye on the suffering patient profess to summon their own familiar spirit who imparts to them the needed information. The witch-finder throws some rice on a winnowing sieve, and places a light in front of it. He then mutters some incantations, and rubs the rice, watching the flame, and when this flickers, it is owing to the presence of the familiar,* and the witch-finder to whom alone the spirit is visible, pretends to receive from it the revelation which he communicates to the enquirer to the effect that the sufferer is afflicted by the familiar of some rival witch-finder, or sorcerer, or witch, whom he names. The villagers then cause the attendance of the person denounced, who is brought into the presence of the sufferer, and ordered to haul out his evil spirit. It is useless for him to plead that he has no such spirit; this only leads to his being unmercifully beaten. His best line of defence is to admit what is laid to his charge, and to act as if really the master of the situation. Some change for the better in the patient may take place. This is ascribed to his delivery from the familiar, and the sorcerer is allowed to depart. But if there is no amelioration in the condition of the sick person, the chastisement of the sorcerer is continued till he can bear no more, and not unfrequently dies under the ill treatment he is subjected to or its effects.

* An evil spirit supposed to attend when called.

"A milder method is, when the person denounced is required to offer sacrifices of animals to appease or drive away the possessing devil; this he dare not refuse to do, and if the sickness thereupon ceases, it is of course concluded that the devil has departed; but if it continue, the sorcerer is turned out of his home, and driven from his village, if nothing worse is done to him." pp. 179, 200.

South African Witch-Doctors.

ZULU WARRIOR.

South Africa is inhabited by several native tribes. Two of them, called Kafirs and Zulus, are noted for their warlike

habits. The word "Kafir," means 'infidel,' and was given to them by Malay Muhammadans. In complexion the Kafirs and Zulus are blackish red; their hair is crisp, inclining to woolly; but the nose is not so flat, nor the colour so dark as that of the negro. They cultivate to some extent, but depend largely on their cattle. Their huts are ranged in a circle called a *Kraal.* In the middle of the village is a place where all the cattle are kept and the corn stored up. Beyond that are the huts where the people live, and outside there is a fence which encloses all the village like a round belt. Warriors decorate themselves with feathers; a spear is the chief weapon; a long narrow shield is used for defence.

Among the Zulus there is deep-rooted belief in witchcraft. If a man gets sick or any other misfortune has happened to him; it is because he has been bewitched by some enemy, and a witch-doctor must be employed to "smell him out." The usual procedure is as follows:

The friends of the sick man go to consult the witch-doctor, without however informing him what is the special object of their visit. He is supposed to know their thoughts and not require to be informed. Before proceeding to business, the witch-doctor demands his fee. His clients plead poverty, that they have nothing just now, but will pay by and by. But with the witch-doctor, it is no pay, no advice, and no credit on any condition. Finding it impossible to get his advice without the fee in advance, it is paid, not without a loud complaint on the part of the witch-doctor, that it is too little.

The clients sit around the witch-doctor, he shouts, "Beat and hear my people," each of the persons present having snapped his fingers, replies, "I hear." The witch-doctor now pretends to have a vision indistinct at first, but becoming more distinct gradually, until he sees the actual thing that has occurred. As the vision breaks on his view, he keeps up a running commentary in a loud voice on what he sees. To find out what the applicants want to know, the witch-doctor takes up animals and human beings, proceeding as follows:—

"Beat and hear my people." They snap their fingers and say, "I hear," "You want to know something about an animal with hair. A cow is sick; what is the matter with her? No, I'm wrong. A cow is lost; I see a cow in the bush. Nay, don't beat my people; I'm wrong. I see; now beat vigorously; the thing relates to people. Somebody is ill—a man is ill—he is an old man. No, I see now; it's a boy—beat vigorously. He is sick. The spirits are angry with him. Kill a cow, and the boy will recover."

The witch-doctor seeks to know all that is going on in the village, so that he generally understands the circumstances. If clever, he can discover from the applicants themselves what has happened, and send them away with a deep impression of his prophetic abilities.

The Zulus have an infinite variety of charms; such as bits of bone, scraps of skin, claws, teeth—in fact anything which they wear about their persons to ward off the "evil eye" and the hundred other effects of witchcraft.

When a chief gets ill, he always fancies some one in the village has made him so. The witch-doctor must be sent for, so that the person who has made the chief ill may be "smelt out." Until this is done no one ever expects the chief to get better.

Once in a village near a mission station a chief caught a very bad cold. Instead of trying to cure it quietly at home, he sent for the witch-doctor to find out who had given it to him. Then a poor old man was "smelt out." The old man was a favourite with the chief, but the doctor said he had given him his bad cold, and everybody

ZULU WITCH-DOCTOR.

In the above way many innocent men and women lose their lives. Revenge, jealousy, hatred, and covetousness, lurk behind this belief in witchcraft, and turn it to deadly uses. Certain men have a grudge against some one belonging to their village, who is rich in cattle and sheep. They talk together about him; lay their plans, give a present to the witch-doctor, and set about killing him. They go to the chief and lay their case before him somewhat after this fashion: "We are troubled with much sickness, people are dying, cattle are dying, owls are flying about, snakes are appearing, we are bewitched by some one." The chief may ask by whom, then they give the poor innocent man's name. After that the chief refers them to the great smeller-out, the witch-doctor of the country. On arriving at his hut, this great witch-doctor, who has already been presented with an ox, knows very well whom to select as a victim. He goes through certain performances, and after much noise and nonsense, picks out this poor man, who is entirely ignorant of the crafty wicked plot of his neighbours. The victim protests against the decision of the witch-doctor, declares his innocence in front of them all, but the wily witch-doctor when he sees all the others are with him, upholds his verdict. The unhappy man thus accused returns as a criminal to the chief, and swears that he knows nothing about these charges; but now all are opposed to him, he pleads alone in front of the chief, for whose final decision they

believed it, and felt very angry with him. A guard of 20 men was at once put round the old man's house, and the chief said he must die. When the missionary heard what was going on, he went to the chief's house to beg him to spare the old man's life. But it was of no use. Talking only made the chief's cold worse, and then he felt more angry still with the old man. Soon after the missionary was gone, the old man was strangled.

WITCH-DOCTOR.

wait. It may be, "cast him to the wolves," then and there, or a command to kill him in his own village; or he may be pardoned, or he may flee the country; but after such a trial as this, his position is lost, the black brand of the witch is upon him, and his life is in jeopardy every day. The most common result is that he is killed, and one or two of his wives with him; his oxen and sheep are taken by his false accusers, and his home becomes a heap of ruins.

A missionary reports that in 1890 thirty such cases came under his personal observation in one month. Such are the effects

of the unjust, cruel, and murderous power of witchcraft among the Zulus.*

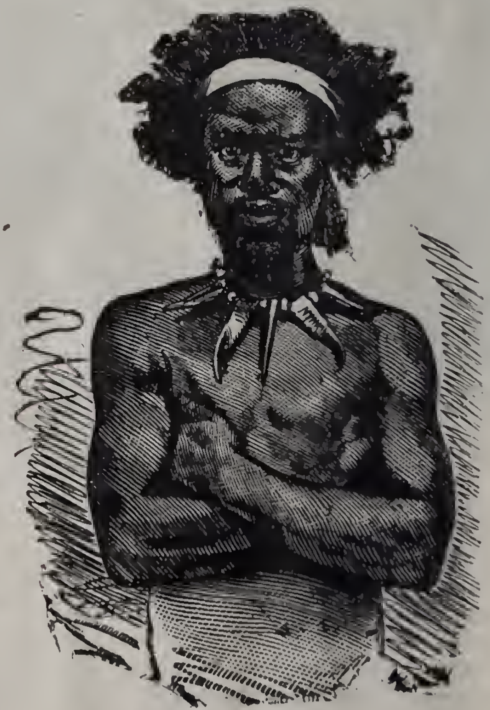
Chaka and the Witch-doctors.—About 70 years ago, when Chaka the Terrible was king of the Zulus, the political power of the witch-finders had reached a great height. They were in the habit of denouncing as wizards one after the other of the king's ministers and chieftains. It was difficult to put a stop to these wholesale murders, for the sympathy of the people was always on the side of the witch-finders, cruel though they were. At last the king thought of an expedient. He killed a bullock, and with his own hands smeared its blood over the royal hut in the dead of night. Next day he summoned a Council and announced that some one had been guilty of high treason in defiling the King's hut with blood, and that too when it stood apparently secure from outrage in the very middle of the village. What was to be done? The witch-finders were summoned and commanded on pain of death to declare who was the criminal. This they were quite ready to do, and named without hesitation one after the other of the great chieftains who sat trembling around. But instead of dooming the wretched victim to death, the witch-finders who named a chieftain, heard to their astonishment, that they were to be executed, and the denounced victim kept alive. This went on for some time, until one cleverer than the rest, yet afraid of committing himself too much, rose up and said oracularly, 'I smell the heavens above!' Chaka took this as a compliment, as well as a guess in the right direction, ordered all the remaining witch-finders to be slain on the spot, and appointed the fortunate oracle to be his one and only witch-finder for ever after.†

* *Among the Matabele*, pp. 34, 36. R. T. S. Price 1s. 6d.

† Lady Barker, *A Year's Housekeeping in South Africa*, pp. 188, 189.

A Kafir Prophet.

About sixty years ago the Kafirs had several wars with Europeans. In 1856 the chiefs devised a plan by which all the Kafirs would unite in attacking Europeans, who would thus be destroyed. A Kafir prophet was to tell the people that the spirits of the dead had commanded that all cattle were to be killed and eaten, and every graiu of corn consumed. If they did so, on a certain day the ancient heroes of their race would come back, myriads of beautiful cattle would rise out of the ground and cover it far and wide, and vast fields of waving corn would spring up, ripe for eating. Trouble, sickness, and old age would be known no more, and the sky would fall on the whites



A KAFIR PROPHET.

and crush them out forever, and with them every Kafir who opposed the commands of the spirit. A delirious frenzy seized the whole community. They killed and wasted their possessions and prepared great kraals for the coming millions of cattle so soon to appear. Even when they had come to the starving point, they worked on, making enormous sacks to hold the milk which was soon to flow like water!

Meanwhile the Government of the Cape Colony, which could not stay these mad proceedings, did all it could to protect its frontier, and laid in stores of food in pity for the misguided people. For while the masses were acting under the influence of superstition, there were leaders whose plan it was to hurl their followers, when half-starving and frantic, upon the colony. These leaders fancied that such a despairing host would prove irresistible, and would regain for them their ancient dominion in the land. They probably relied on the destruction of the whites and on the spoils of war to console their people for the non-appearance of the spirits with the wonderful cattle and the abundant corn.

At length, early in the year 1857, the morning of the day of resurrection so long promised and ardently expected dawned. All night long the Kafirs had watched in the most intense excitement, looking to see two blood-red suns rise over the eastern hills, when the heavens would fall and crush the hated races. They were famished and half-dying men, yet that night was a time of fierce, delirious joy. The morning was to see their sorrows ended. The morning came, but the same old sun bathed the hillsides with silver light and all was unchanged. "Could the predictions prove untrue?" No! it must be at noon; or, when noontime passed, it must be at sunset! But when the sun went down in peaceful splendor, the Kafirs awoke to the facts of their dreadful condition. The leaders tried to cheer them and said the day of resurrection was only put off. But they had made a mistake fatal to their success in not assembling the people together, on pretence of witnessing the resurrection at some place from which they could burst upon the colony. It was too late to rectify this blunder. Fierce excitement gave way to despair. The only hope left was to go to the colony as beggars to ask bread. Sometimes whole families sat down and died together, fifteen to twenty skeletons being often found afterwards under a single tree. Brother fought with brother for scraps of those great milk-sacks made for the imaginary supply. The aged and the feeble were abandoned, while the young and strong fed upon wild plants and the roots of trees. A stream of emaciated beings poured into the colony, who sat down before the farmhouses and asked in piteous tones for food. The official returns of British Kaffraria showed a decrease of population during the fatal year, 1857, from 105,000 to 38,000. The prophet himself perished.*

Belief in Witchcraft among Christians.

A belief in evil spirits who caused sickness, storms, and other misfortunes was universal in ancient times. The Celtic tribes, early settlers in Europe, were deeply imbued with this belief. The first converts to Christianity were generally individuals who embraced the religion from a conviction of its truth, and showed their sincerity by the persecution they endured. After the Roman Emperor Constantine declared himself a Christian, sometimes hundreds were baptized in one day. Many such hasty converts, however, not properly instructed, retained their old belief in demons, and sought to propitiate them as before.

* *The Missionary Herald.*

Such superstitions lingered long among the Celtic tribes in Scotland and Ireland. A traveller who made tours through these countries about 1769, found that the fire festival was observed. Fires were lighted near each other, between which menand cattle passed to save them from disease. Leaping through the flames was also practised, as it still is in some parts of India. Cakes were baked with scrupulous attention to certain rites and forms, and divided into fragments, which were formally dedicated to birds or beasts of prey that they might spare the flocks and herds. A small piece of land, which was never ploughed or cultivated, was dedicated to the devil, who, to please him, was called the "good-man."

It was believed that by making an image of a person and sticking it with pins, it would cause his death. Certain persons, called witches, were supposed to make an agreement with the devil. They imagined that they gave themselves up to him, body and soul, while he engaged that they should want for nothing, and be able to assume whatever shape they pleased, to visit and torment their enemies. The devil was supposed to give the witch one of his evil spirits to do what it was directed. By the aid of this imp and the devil together, the witch, who was almost always an old woman, was enabled to fly through the air on a broomstick, and to transform herself into various shapes, particularly those of cats and hares; to inflict diseases on whom she pleased, and to punish her enemies in a variety of ways.

Many poor old women were accused of witchcraft. There were men who claimed to be witch-finders. One method was to thrust pins into various parts of the body to find the devil's mark which did not bleed. Another plan was to wrap the suspected person in a sheet, having the great toes and thumbs tied together and so dragged through a pond or river. If she sank, it was considered a proof of her innocence; if she floated through the help of the Devil, she was guilty. Another custom was to drag them about, till extreme weariness made them confess that they were witches, upon which they were executed, by being first strangled and then burnt.

Individual charges of witchcraft were made at different periods, but it was not till about the end of the 14th century that they were brought on a large scale. Witches were no longer burnt in twos or threes, but in scores and hundreds. Within a century and a half, it was reckoned that at least 30,000 witches had been burned.

With the spread of enlightment the persecution gradually ceased. The last sentence of death for witchcraft in Scotland took place in 1722.

The superstition still lingers in some parts of Europe among the ignorant. Even in 1895 an Irishman murdered his wife, under the belief that she was bewitched.

RAIN-MAKERS.

Plants and animals are dependent upon rainfall. If droughts were long continued, both would perish. Among uncivilized nations, where the rainfall is scanty and uncertain, there are rain-makers who profess to be able to bring down rain. Before describing them, accounts will be given of attempts to produce rain in India and Ceylon.

Rainmaking in India.

In the year 1892 the following means to produce rain were employed at Chunar, on the banks of the Ganges:

"The rains this year held off for a long time and on the night of July 24th the following ceremony was performed secretly. Between the hours of 9 and 10 P.M., a barber's wife went from door to door and

invited the women to join in ploughing. They all collected in a field from which all males were excluded. Three women from a cultivator's family stripped off all their clothes; two were yoked to a plough like oxen, and a third held the handle. They then began to imitate the operation of ploughing. The woman who had the plough in her hand shouted, 'O Mother Earth! bring parched grain, water, and chaff. Our stomachs are breaking to pieces from hunger and thirst.' Then the landlord and village accountant approached them and laid down some grain, water, and chaff in the field. The women then dressed and returned home."*

Among some American Indians, to protect fields from vermin, insects, and blight, the mother of a family at night when the children were asleep and the sky overcast, took off all her clothes and made the circuit of the field.*

English people have a game called, 'the tug of war.' There are two parties who take hold of the opposite ends of a rope, and then each tries to pull the other over. This is mere sport. But the men in the picture are not amusing themselves; they are pulling for rain!

The custom is dying out, but when there was a want of rain, the above plan was adopted in some parts of the country. Two parties were made—a rain party and a fair weather party. They pulled at a rope, and having agreed beforehand that the rain party was to come off victorious, they tugged away till it got the best of it, and then they believed that rain would come. All the time those engaged in it abused one

PULLING FOR RAIN.

* *Crooke's Popular Religion and Folk Lore of Northern India*, p. 43.

* Schoolcraft, *Manners and Customs*, Vol. v. p. 70.

another with filthy language as is done during the Holi festival.

What ignorance is shown in believing that such child's play can bring rain! It is especially lamentable for people to think that obscene abuse can do any good.

Rain-makers in South Africa.

Parts of South Africa are subject to long droughts. The chiefs themselves claim to produce rain. To make the people believe them, when rain threatens, they collect various kinds of roots, snake-bones, feathers of different birds, the liver of the crocodile, leaves, and the bark of several trees. All these may be boiled in a pot or burned on the ground. This strange compound is supposed to have power over the clouds and cause rain.

If the attempts of the chiefs fail, rain-doctors are called in, whose medicines are supposed to be always successful. Various methods are employed by the rain-doctors. Smoke is somewhat like clouds. One plan is to kindle fires, in a row from which smoke arises. To make the medicine stronger, the rain-doctors, leap through the fire as shown in the picture. A missionary and other people are represented as looking on.

Dr. Moffat gives the following account of other attempts at rainmaking:

The rainmaker who came to my station found the clouds more difficult to control than in the place he had left. He considered that there was some secret machination at work against him. When urged to make repeated trials, he would reply, 'You can only give me sheep and goats to kill, therefore I make only goat rain; give me for slaughter oxen, I shall let you see ox-rain.' One day as he was taking a sound

RAIN MAKING IN SOUTH AFRICA.

sleep, a shower fell, on which one of the principal men entered his house to congratulate him, but to his utter astonishment found him totally insensible to what was transpiring. "Hallo, my father! I thought you were making rain," said the intruder. The rain-maker, arising from his slumber, and seeing his wife sitting on the floor shaking a milk-sack in order to obtain a little butter to anoint her hair, he replied, pointing to the operation of churning, 'Do you not see my wife churning rain as fast as she can?' His reply gave entire satisfaction, and it presently spread through the village that the rain-maker had churned the shower out of a milk-sack.

"The moisture caused by the shower was dried up by a scorching sun, and many long weeks followed without a single cloud, and when they did appear, they might sometimes be seen, to the great mortification of the rain-maker, to discharge their watery treasures at an immense distance. This disappointment was increased when a heavy cloud would pass over with tremendous thunder, but not one drop of rain. There had been several successive years of drought, during which water had not been seen to flow upon the ground. The women had cultivated extensive fields, but the seed was lying in the soil as it had been thrown from the hand, the cattle were dying from want of pasture, and hundreds of human beings, resembling skeletons, were going to the fields in quest of unwholesome roots and reptiles, while many were dying with hunger. All these circumstances irritated the rain-maker very much, he was often puzzled to find something on which to lay the blame, for he had exhausted his skill.

"One night a small cloud passed over, and the only flash of lightning, from which a heavy peal of thunder burst, struck a tree in the town. Next day the rain-maker and a number of people met to perform the usual ceremony on such an event. It was ascended, and ropes of grass and grass roots were bound round different parts of the trunk. When these bandages were made, he deposited some of his nostrums, and got quantities of water handed up, which he poured with great solemnity on the wounded tree, amid the shouts of the assembled multitude. This done, the tree was hewn down, dragged out of the village, and burnt to ashes. Soon after this unmeaning ceremony, he got large bowls of water, with which was mingled an infusion of plants. All the men of the village then came together, and passed in succession before him, when he sprinkled each with a zebra's tail which he had dipped in the water.

The rain-maker had often said that if they could procure for him the heart of a lion he would show them that he could make rain so abundant that a man might think himself well off to be under shelter, as when it fell it might sweep whole towns away. He had discovered that the clouds required strong medicine, and a lion's heart would do the business. To obtain this the rain-maker knew was no joke. One day it was announced that a lion had attacked one of the cattle outposts not far from the village, and a party set off for the two-fold purpose of getting a key to the clouds and disposing of a dangerous enemy. The orders were imperative, whatever the consequences might be, which, in this instance, might have been very serious, had not one of our men shot the terrific animal dead with a gun. This was no sooner done than it was cut up for roasting and boiling; no matter if it had previously eaten some of their relatives, they ate it in turn. Nothing could exceed their enthusiasm when they returned to the village bearing the lion's heart, and singing the conqueror's song in full chorus. The rain-maker prepared his medicines, kindled his fires, and might be seen upon the top of the hill, stretching forth his puny hands, and beck-

oning the clouds to draw near; or even shaking his spear, and threatening that if they disobeyed they should feel his ire. The deluded population believed all this, and wondered that the rains would not fall.

The end of it all was, that to account for the hard-heartedness of the clouds, the blame was laid upon the missionaries. When clouds were approaching, the missionaries looked at them with their white faces, and rain would not fall. Another excuse was that the tolling of the church bell, was the reason why there was no rain.

As all this and much more did not succeed, the rain-maker had recourse to another stratagem. He knew well that baboons, a very powerful and fierce kind of monkey, were not easily caught among the rocky glens and shelving precipices; therefore, in order to gain time, he informed the men that to make rain he must have a baboon; that the animal must be without blemish, not a hair wanting on its body. One would have thought that a simpleton would have seen through his tricks, as there being able to present him with a baboon in that condition was impossible, even though they caught him asleep. Forth sallied a band of chosen runners, who ascended the neighbouring mountain. The baboons from their lofty domiciles had been in the habit of looking down on the plain beneath at the natives encircling and pursuing antelopes, little dreaming that one day they would themselves be the objects of pursuit. They hobbled off in consternation, grunting and screaming and leaping from rock to rock, occasionally looking down on their pursuers, grinning and gnashing their teeth. After a long pursuit, with wounded limbs, scratched bodies, and broken toes, a young one was secured and brought to the village, the captors exulting as if they had obtained a great spoil. The wily rain-maker, on seeing the animal, put on a countenance exhibiting the most intense sorrow, exclaiming, 'My heart is rent in pieces; I am dumb with grief;' and pointing to the ear of the baboon which was scratched, and the tail which had lost some hairs, added, 'Did I not tell you that I could not make rain if there was one hair wanting?' After some days another was obtained; but there was still some imperfection, real or alleged.

At last, the people wearied out with the excuses of the rain-maker, wished to kill him as is often done. Through the intercession of the Missionaries, he was allowed to go to another village.

American Indian Rain-Makers.

Among the American Indians, wonder-workers are called *medicine-men.* They are all supposed to be acquainted with charms which give them miraculous powers.

Every Indian has his medicine or mystery bag which he regards with reverence, and will not part with for any price. He looks upon it as a kind of charm that is to protect him from evil. He takes it with him to battle, and when he dies it is his companion. The medicine bag is usually the skin of some quadruped, as the beaver, otter, pole-cat, and weasel; or of some bird, as the eagle, the magpie, and hawk, or of some reptile, as the snake, and the toad. The skin is stuffed with anything the owner chooses to put into it, such as dry grass or leaves; and it is carefully sewn up into some curious form, and ornamented in a strange manner. Some medicine bags are large and conspicuous as the skin of a wolf; while others are very small, and altogether hidden under the dress.

The animal is chosen as follows: A lad about 15 years of age goes into the jungle for two or three days, crying to the Great Spirit and fasting the whole time. When he falls asleep the first animal of which he

dreams, or pretends to have dreamed, he considers the Great Spirit has chosen to be his protector through life. He kills it and forms with it his medicine bag. It seems strange that he should kill his protector.

It is considered the greatest disgrace for an Indian to sell or give away his medicine bag. It is nearly as disgraceful to lose it in battle. His enemy carries it off and displays it as a trophy; whilst the loser is known as "a man without medicine;" or "he has lost his medicine," until he can replace it again. This can only be done by rushing into battle and taking one from an enemy whom he slays with his own hand. This done, his medicine is restored. All this tends to make a man fight bravely in battle to protect his medicine or to regain it if lost.

While male Indians generally have their medicine bags, some are known as "medicine men," being specially skilled in their use. Among them are rain-makers. A traveller thus describes their attempts at an Indian village.

The Indians at this place raised a great deal of corn, but the growing crop was threatened to be destroyed by drought. The women came crying and groaning to the rain-makers, asking them to send rain. The great object of the rain-makers was to gain time. They told the women that if they began too soon, it might result in failure. After a few days delay, the women became so clamorous, that the rain-makers felt that something must be done. They assembled in the council-house with all their strange apparatus and abundance of sweet-smelling plants, with a fire prepared to burn them. They were then to prepare medicine to bring down rain. Each rain-maker was afterwards to try his skill.

The first who went up was called the Shield. He stood all day counting over and over his string of mystery-beads, the whole village standing around and praying for his success. Not a cloud appeared, and at sunset he came down. The people said that "his *medicine* was not good."

The Stag was the next. On his left hand he carried a beautiful shield and a

RAIN-MAKER.

long lance in his right; and on his head the skin of a raven, the bird that soars above the clouds. He flourished his shield, and brandished his lance, and raised his voice, but in vain. At sunset, the sky was clear, and the women were crying.

The Beaver was the next. He also spent his breath in vain and came down at night. Next morning the White Buffalo's Hair took his stand. He was splendidly dressed. Among his ornaments were locks of hair taken with his own hands from the heads of his enemies. On his arm he carried his shield, while his other grasped a bow and a single arrow. The villagers were all gathered around him. He first threw up a feather to show how the wind blew, and then told the people that the rain would come from that direction. His shield would draw a great cloud; he would pierce it with his arrow, and rain would fall in torrents.

RAIN-MAKERS.

White Buffalo's Hair spent the day, sometimes addressing the people, sometimes pretending to talk with the winds; stamping his foot, and asking the spirits to send rain.

At the approach of evening White Buffalo's Hair saw a dark cloud coming. He then commanded the cloud to come nearer, while he stood waving his shield, stamping his foot, as he drew his bow, threatening the heavens, and commanding it to rain. He then shot an arrow at the cloud, and the rain poured down with flashes of lightning. The people received him with great honour, and gave him the title of "medicine man."

A poor woman was killed by a flash of lightning. White Buffalo's Hair was afraid that he might be charged with her death. He made the excuse that his medicine was too strong. This was accepted, and he received hereafter increased honour under the name of "Big Double Medicine.!"*

* Catlin's *North American Indians.* Vol. I. pp. 35, 134-137. (abridged.)

BUFFALO DANCE.

Now that Indians are acquainted with fire-arms, they sometimes shoot with guns instead of arrows. Some of them are seen doing so in the picture, while others flourish battleaxes.

As already mentioned, the great object of the rain-makers is to gain time, knowing that rain will generally come at last.

Buffalo and Bear Dances of the American Indians.

There were formerly large herds of wild buffaloes roaming about the country on which the Indians depended much for food. To bring these herds near their villages, buffalo dances are employed.

Each man has a mask made of the buffalo's head with the horns on, and it generally has a strip of the skin hanging to it, with the tail attached. Each dancer has in his hand his favourite lance or bow with which he is used to slay the buffalo. The dance goes on while drums are beaten, rattles are shaken, and amid the shouts and yells of the bystanders.

When a dancer is tired, he bends quite forward and sinks towards the ground. Another then draws a bow upon him and hits him with a blunt arrow, and he falls like a buffalo. He is seized by the bystanders, who drag him out by the heels, bandishing their knives over him. Having gone through the motions of skinning and cutting him up, they let him off, and his place is at once supplied by another who dances with his mask on.

By thus taking places the dance is kept up day and night until the desired effect is produced, that of "making buffalo come." It is considered *never to fail*, because the dance is continued for weeks till the buffaloes make their appearance, which is attributed to its performance.

Bear Dance.

The bear is the chief beast of prey in North America. The Indians eat its flesh and use its fat to oil their long hair and the surface of their bodies. Before setting out on a bear hunt, several days are spent in

BEAR DANCE.

a bear dance, when all join in a song to the Bear Spirit. If this honor were not paid to the Bear Spirit, he would be offended, and prevent their success in the chase.

The bear dance is thus described. One of the chief medicine-men placing over his body the entire skin of a bear, with a war-eagle's quill on his head, took the lead in the dance, looking through the skin which formed a mask that hung over his face. Many others in the dance wore masks on their faces, made of the skin from the bear's head, and all, with the motions of their hands, closely imitated the movements of that animal. Some represented its motion in running, others its peculiar attitude and hanging of the paws, when it is sitting up on its hind feet, and looking out for the approach of an enemy. Without this strange performance, the hunt would certainly end in failure.*

A MEDICINE-MAN PREPARING MEDICINES.

MEDICINE MEN.

Some account has already been given of the Medicine-Men of the American Indians who act as rain-makers. It has also been explained that " medicine," is to be under-

* Catlin, Vol. I. p. 245.

MASKS WORN BY MEDICINE-MEN.

stood in the sense of "*mystery*" or *charm*. But the medicine men also act as doctors, using their charms in certain cases to increase the respect and fear of the people.

For some common diseases, they use

medicines. In cases of pain, they often bleed the part; sometimes they apply red pepper. Frequently they burn sweet-smelling plants. Sometimes they anoint the body; sometimes steam it. For pain in the bowels, they use purgatives. For sick stomach they try to induce vomiting by tickling the throat with a feather. When these fail there is a resort to magic; but many medicine-men rely entirely on incantations. Diseases are caused by evil spirits, and the only remedy is to expel them.

The medicine-men are regarded with great awe and dread by the ignorant Indians, whom they can easily deceive by their conjuring tricks. They profess to converse with gods and spirits, and to have the power of life and death over individuals. They pretend to foretell events and to be able to point out where stolen articles are to be found. In all councils of war and peace, they have a seat with the chiefs. They are consulted before any public step is taken, and the greatest deference is paid to their opinions.

MEDICINE MAN PERSONATING A DEMON.

To frighten the Indians, the medicine-men have a variety of strange dresses. They wear curious masks; the skins of many animals, as bears, snakes, bats; the beaks, claws and tails of birds; hoofs of deer, goats, antelopes, &c.

The medicine-man endeavours to extract as much as he can from all who seek his services. A traveller saw a sick child brought to a medicine-man to ascertain the cause of the disease and the remedy. A present has been given, but the medicine-man does not consider it enough, and the spirit refuses to answer. When asked the reason, the reply is that everything necessary has not yet been done. Upon this the father gives some tobacco and blue cloth. Still the spirit is silent. When asked, "what is the matter?" the applicant is told that sugar is still wanting. Answers like the following are then given: "Your child has a piece of iron in its stomach which must be taken out; the patient has a bear's claw in his body; the child is sick because it has a bad name—it must be changed; such a one is sick, because he has killed a bear and given no part of it to the spirits. You must throw your

dog into the water to feed the spirits; you must kill it and give a feast." Sometimes the answer is, "The soul of the patient is no longer in his body; an evil spirit has carried it off; it is imprisoned; a more powerful spirit must be sent to deliver it." Thereupon the family gives something more for the deliverance of the soul which is brought back to the sick person. The Indians believe that when a sick person is very low, his soul has already departed; he is dead; but he may recover if his soul is brought back.

When the medicine-man thinks he has succeeded in expelling an evil spirit, he directs that guns should be fired at the door of the tent to destroy the evil spirit as it passes out!

Should the patient recover, the medicine-man may be seen for several days after, on the top of a house, with his right arm extended and waving over the gaping multitude, to whom he is vaunting forth the wonderful skill he has acquired in his art, and the undoubted efficacy of his medicine. If, on the contrary, the patient dies, the medicine-man soon changes his dress, and joins in lamentations with the mourners. He protects his reputation by assuring the people that it was the will of the Great Spirit that the patient should die, and his efforts therefore could not avail.

Catlin, an American who lived for years among the Indians, thus describes what he saw in the case of a dying man. The man who had been shot was still living, though two bullets had passed near each other through the centre of his body. There was not the slightest hope of his recovering, but a medicine-man was sent for.

There were several hundred spectators, who when it was announced that the medicine-man was coming were required to form a ring, leaving a clear space of 30 or 40 feet around the dying man. A space was also opened to allow the medicine-man to pass through the crowd without touching any one. All were silent and nothing could be heard but the slight tinkling of the rattles on the dress of the medicine-man.

MEDICINE-MEN.

Tho picture represents the appearance of the medicine-man. He came near with his body in a crouching position, with a slow step. His body and head were entirely covered with the skin of a yellow bear, the head of which (his own head being inside of it) served as a mask. The huge claws of the bear were also dangling on his wrists and ankles. In one hand he shook a frightful rattle, and in the other brandished his magical medicine-spear. To all this he added wild and startling jumps and yells, with the grunts and snarls and growls of the bear, in incantations to the good and bad spirits on behalf of his patient. This jumping and dancing were continued amid the deep silence of the audience for about half an hour, when the man died. The medicine-man then ran off, and packed up his medicine dress.

As already mentioned, the ignorant superstitious Indians are not undeceived. The medicine-man retains his reputation. The time for the death of the patient had come, and he could not avert it. On the other hand, he claims the credit of any cure.

REVIEW.

The foregoing pages form a sad picture of human ignorance, folly, and wickedness. There is a Persian proverb, "The proper devil of mankind is man." Most of the evils from which we suffer arise from our own misconduct or that of others.

The following remarks suggest themselves :

1. **A belief in demons and witchcraft as the cause of disease exists only among savages and half-civilized nations.**—The belief prevails universally among savages. The illustrations given have been drawn largely from the wild tribes of India, African Zulus and Negroes, the Red Men of America, and others. It was the original superstition in Ceylon, Burma, Siam and China. Though condemned by Buddhism, it has not been able to extirpate it.

A belief in witchcraft, magic, and the power of charms is a test of the civilization of a people. In enlightened countries stories of witches changing themselves into tigers and such like, are simply laughed at. Those who accept such tales as true show that they are half savages. With the advance of civilization such beliefs die out.

2. **There are no such beings as the demons supposed to cause disease.**—Ignorant parents frighten their children by saying that some one will take them. Suppose a mother cries, "Come and take away this child," she knows very well that no one will come. Why? because there is no such being. Just as children are deceived and frightened by their parents, so the parents, in their turn, are deceived by devil priests, who frighten them into performing the ceremonies by which they get their living.

The Bible tells us about Satan and other evil spirits; but they are quite different from the supposed demons invoked in devil-dancing. They do not cause disease, but tempt men to sin.

3. **Devil Ceremonies are a useless waste of money which ought to be spent in getting good doctors.**—Nearly every ceremony requires to be paid for, some of them at a high rate. When there is sickness in a house, the income may be less, from the men being unable to work, while the expenses are increased. Money, especially in such cases, should not be spent needlessly. Just as pigs, hares, birds, &c., seek to prey upon fields and gardens, so do thousands of devil priests, astrologers, &c., try to take the money of ignorant people, without doing them any good in return.

Some people are so ignorant that they do not give any medicine in sickness, trusting

only to charms and devil dancing. Others, who are a little more enlightened, think that charms should be used to give effect to the medicine.

It should be clearly understood that God has given certain properties to bodies which act without charms, and cannot be altered by charms. Fire burns, pepper is hot, vinegar is sour, arrack intoxicates, arsenic kills. Suppose a man charmed some water before taking a drink to quench his thirst or a woman charmed some salt before putting it into the pot, any one would laugh at them as fools. They know that they would act without charms. But it is just as absurd to think that charms are necessary in the case of medicines. Castor oil, mercury, and other drugs act from their own nature, just like water or salt. When any one says that charms are also needed, he only shows his ignorance.

It may be said that doctors themselves recommend devil ceremonies. This is only done by ignorant men. To conceal their want of skill, they lay the blame on demons. In this country any one may set up as a doctor as easily as he can open a shop. Only good doctors should be employed, such as have had a medical education or are skilful through experience.

4. **Devil Ceremonies tend to increase disease.**—Two men having gardens, are troubled by pigs coming in at night. One man gets ceremonies performed to keep them out. The pigs never mind, and the holes in his fences become larger and larger. The other man mends his fences, and the pigs are kept out.

Bad water, insufficient clothing, and exposure to the night air are some of the chief causes of fever; bad food of diarrhœa. Attention to these is like mending the fences to keep out pigs, whereas devil ceremonies have no effect upon them. Indeed, devil ceremonies often do harm. They take place at night, and often last a long time. The body is then weakest and the causes of disease strongest: exposure to the night air and fatigue sometimes make the sick person worse or even cause his death. Especially when fever is about, ceremonies at night tend to spread sickness among all who take part in them.

5. **Devil Ceremonies are morally degrading.**—There is a Sanskrit proverb, "As is the god, so is the worshipper." We tend to become like those whom we worship. Demons are supposed to be malicious beings, hating what is good, and delighting to injure others. Demon worship fosters evil passions. In one charm, the following prayer is made to a she-demon with regard to a supposed enemy: "Eat his flesh and drink his blood. Eat his bones, and muscles and nerves. Drink his heart's blood and suck his marrow. Eat his liver and lungs and entrails." To offer such a prayer is a great sin. There is no she-demon to fulfil such a horrible request: the mischief falls upon the head of the man who utters it. It makes him like a demon. He who paid him to repeat it is equally guilty. People who try to injure others do most harm to themselves.

6. **Devil Ceremonies are sinful and dangerous.**—A wise, good, and rightful king demands the obedience of his subjects. Suppose some of his people should set up a low, vile man as their king, they would justly be punished for rebellion. God is the Creator and rightful Lord of this world. He first gave us life; He keeps us in life; we live on His earth; everything we have belongs to Him. He justly claims our obedience. But demon-worshippers disregard His commands, and honour evil spirits instead of Himself. They deserve the severest punishment.

English people sometimes put brass collars round the necks of their dogs, with their names on them, showing that the dogs are their property. Persons who

wear charms or perform devil ceremonies show that they have forsaken God, and given themselves up to cruel demons.

The uselessness of Charms and Mantras may be shown in three ways:

1. Mere words have no power. What is considered the strongest charm cannot hurt even a fly. People may trample charms under foot, cut them in pieces, throw them into the fire. If they cannot protect themselves, much less can they protect those who wear them.

It has been mentioned that the Burmese have charms tattooed on their bodies to prevent their being shot or drowned, yet such men die in these ways, showing the uselessness of the charms.

2. The demons of which the people of India stand so much in dread have no existence. They are like the imaginary goblins by which some ignorant parents try to frighten their children. There are no such beings as Sitala Devi, Mari Amman, &c.

3. The nations of the world that suffer least from sickness and live longest, who are the most prosperous, never use charms, while they abound among savage tribes.

How to keep Healthy.

Care.—Many diseases can easily be cured by a little care at the beginning. The body, itself, gives help. If dust gets into the eyes, tears begin to flow to wash it out; if we take unwholesome food, sometimes the stomach tries to vomit it, or the bowels seek to get rid of it.

When a person feels ill, he should stop work, and lie down, keeping himself comfortably warm. Instead of his usual meals, let him take conjee or some light food. If this is done, it will often be sufficient to restore him to health.

Fever.—This is the disease of which most people die. One great cause is bad water. Decaying things, whether plants or animals, are generally poisonous. The water of marshes in which plants are rotting, is unfit for use. One of the worst kind of fever is brought on by matter from privies soaking into wells. Privies should never be near wells. If good water cannot be had, the water used should be boiled, which helps to destroy the poison.

During feverish seasons exposure to the night air and cold winds should be avoided. Warm clothing is a great safeguard. Cots are better than lying on the ground. Some food should be taken before going out in the morning. All changes of the weather require care.

Cholera.—When cholera is about, unripe or decaying fruit, tainted meat and fish, raw vegetables and articles difficult of digestion, should especially be avoided, though they are bad at all times. Pure water is very important. Warm clothing should be worn. A flannel belt over the bowels at night is a great protection.

Small pox.—Vaccination is the grand preservative against small-pox. Children should be vaccinated when about three months old, and it should be repeated after puberty. This will ensure almost complete safety.

By observing the directions given, much sickness might be prevented, and people might add some years to their life. In serious cases of illness, a good doctor should be sent for; but charms and devil ceremonies should never be used, as they only do harm, and bring down God's anger.

Spiritual Health.

We have souls as well as bodies. Our bodies must die, but our souls will live for ever, either in happiness or misery. It is of far more importance to enjoy spiritual than bodily health.

Are our souls in health? Alas! no. Every one has the leprosy of sin. In God's sight

we are, as it were, covered from head to foot with putrefying sores. Who can count up the wicked thoughts, words, and deeds of which we have been guilty!

There is only one Physician of souls, the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Son of the one true God. He became man and died in our room. Trust in Him as your Saviour, seek pardon in His name. Your sins will be forgiven for His sake, and God will give you His Holy Spirit to purify your heart. He will watch over you through life, and at death receive you to dwell for ever in His palace.

Try in every thing to please God, your great Father in heaven. Obey His laws for the health of your body; obey His laws in the Bible, for the health of your soul. Seek to fight against disease, ignorance and misery. Thus will your life be happy and useful, according to God's loving will.

Duty of Educated Men.

Persons who have been well educated should do all in their power to put an end to the superstitious beliefs which have been described.

Ignorant women are the chief supporters of such customs. They wish them observed through love to the sick person in hope of a cure. But if an unskilful person tries to give medicines to a sick person, he may do much harm. Wisdom is necessary as well as love. It should be explained that such ceremonies are useless and hurtful, and their performance should be positively forbidden in every case. Charms should be broken off. At the same time, a good doctor should be employed, and God's blessing sought.

One of the most common excuses for demon ceremonies is, that they are the custom. Simply to follow the example of our forefathers would put an end to all improvement. In worldly matters people are not so foolish. All now travel by rail instead of walking on foot or by bullock-carts like their forefathers. So with other improvements.

The great reason why people are frightened about demons and by other superstitions is because they do not worship the Almighty Creator and Preserver of the Universe. Instead of looking to their loving Father in heaven to protect them, they seek only to appease evilspirits by offerings. Trusting in God, they need fear no danger.

By seeking the enlightenment of their ignorant countrymen, educated men would be a great blessing. Dark superstitions, causing constant fear, would pass away, and the happiness of the people would be greatly increased, both in this world and the next.

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